

# Digital Technology for Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows

by

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## Abstract

Saudi fashion designers have encountered numerous challenges promoting their designs to the public in Saudi Arabia, especially women's wear, due to religious and cultural regulations. The primary regulatory barrier is that women are not permitted to expose their bodies in the presence of men. Therefore, Saudi designers must deliver their fashion shows to a single gender audience. Furthermore, because there is no governmental process granting permission for these events, fashion designers are forced to take the risk that fashion shows at which they are exhibiting may be shut down. Therefore, this research investigated whether technology could assist fashion designers in promoting their designs, by replacing live fashion shows with digital versions.

In order to evaluate the practicality of using technology developed for fashion shows in the context of Saudi Arabia, it is necessary to first resolve any religious, cultural and technical barriers that might restrict the potential acceptability of digital versions of live fashion shows. In this research, a mixed methods approach to data collection was employed, consulting stakeholders including cultural leaders, fashion designers, and consumers. The quantitative data instrument was a three-stage questionnaire, and the qualitative data collection involved two stages, i.e. interviews and observations. The data collected was used to create a framework to establish an outcome based on both a visualisation and a guideline. The visualisation covered the multitude of religious, cultural, and technical issues identified by the study. In addition, a guideline to recreate the fashion show method was developed for fashion designers to follow. The outcome of the framework was then evaluated to examine its validity. The visualisation was evaluated by focus groups, comprising consumers, cultural leaders and fashion designers, while the guidelines themselves were evaluated by fashion designers only.

The results obtained from the research clarified that fashion designers are dissatisfied with the current fashion show options, because vital components that would support their success are not present. Therefore, the researcher navigated practices and behaviour in reference to cultural expectations, explored acceptable representations of female in public, developed an approach to modifying this and explored a variety of approaches to creating a visualisation, including using a bodysuit to permit exposure of

certain areas of the body. This enabled the development of a replicable and relatively low-cost approach to creating a digital fashion show with guidelines to recreate it.

The research concluded with a set of recommendations for fashion designers, allowing them to benefit fully from the digital fashion show. It also helped them to utilise the benefits of using a framework and guidelines to promote their collection in Saudi Arabia.

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# Introduction

**Chapter 1     Introduction**

This chapter focuses on: (1) the research background; (2) the statement of the problem; (3) the aims and objectives; (4) the research question; (5) the research methodology; and (6) the structure of this thesis.

**1.1     Research Background**

Fashion design is currently a rapidly increasing sector in Saudi Arabia. However, designers face a number of difficulties in displaying their designs in public, in particular when it comes to the religious and cultural regulations related to women's clothing. The fact that it is prohibited to expose women's bodies in front of men (Quran, 24: 31) means that fashion shows are for female audiences only, or, if they wish to access a public mixed gender audience, this forces Saudi designers to display the new collection in another country. However, exposure to various forms of media has recently made the country more liberal. Saudis now watch fashion shows and movies on television or websites, with their channels being unrestricted and uncensored (Hesbois, 2009), enabling them to see women wearing Western style clothing and exposing their skin. This leads to a number of difficulties in understanding the unique culture and customs of the Saudi community to those who do not live in this society, including in what is considered acceptable behaviour (Busnaina et al., 2010). In addition, there are various restrictions in place on the showing of some kinds of clothes in stores, i.e. the prohibition on placing a mannequin wearing lingerie in a shop window (Variyar, 2012), while such stores, lingerie stores, must also be restricted to females. Also, the culture and religion play a noteworthy role in shaping the behaviour aspects of the purchasers. Therefore, the international fashion brands intending to expand their business boundaries in this region need to act with great sensitivity as well as comprehend the Saudi culture.

Traditional fashion shows in Saudi Arabia are currently facing disapproval from both society and those who are religious (Lewis, 2013). Such fashion shows are held in designated closed places, and are limited to the specific target audience, i.e. women only, with men being forbidden to attend (Saudi Vision 2030, 2017). This has led to the concept of creating a digital fashion show and this current study of the potential role of such a

digital show in a conservative community such as Saudi Arabia. In addition, to these challenges the government is unable to grant permission for a fashion show, even if it is a female only event, leading to the prospect of such shows being shut down (The Economist, 2015). In Saudi Arabia, most shop owners are male, and thus an ability to promote designs to men as well as women will access a larger market, i.e. garments being seen in stores by more customers. Currently, the main promotion methods open to designers consist of presenting designs through the use of social media.

This research focusses on the extent to which a conservative Muslim society, such as that of Saudi Arabia, feels able to accept the concept of digital fashion shows. The current study is one of the first to specialise in the presentation of digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia.

This research aims to open new horizons for emerging fashion designers, including facilitating the presentation of their designs in Saudi Arabia in a low cost manner, rather than choosing the high cost option of modelling designs in other countries.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The research problem constitutes the issue addressed by the research (Creswell, 1994). Over recent decades, there have been a considerable number of changes to the display of garments for fashion shows, commencing with the use of dolls and, more recently, the use of technology, while the digitalisation of models has now become an important factor (D'Apuzzo, 2007). This current study was prompted by an existing lack of research into the issue of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. Fashion shows help to promote self-expression and thus create awareness of a particular issue such as political or religious issues, while also linking the designer to the consumer and highlighting the direction their fashion line is headed (Natanya, 2017). In addition, fashion shows create a source of income for less well-known designers, enabling buyers to attend and purchase clothes to be sold in their stores (Frankel, 2007). All these factors assist fashion designers to increase their profiles and thus their popularity.

However, Saudi Arabia forbids the holding of fashion shows, considering this to be an affront to Islamic rules (Ramady, 2012). In Islam, women must cover their entire bodies in front of non-relative men, apart from their face and hands and with the condition that no kind of beautification is worn (Al-Islam.org). In addition, there is no governmental permission for fashion shows in Saudi Arabia aimed at a mixed gender audience, as this is considered a violation of public morality (Albarqawi, 2017). Therefore, Saudi fashion designers are unable to set up live fashion shows in their own country, which prevents designers at the start of their career from achieving exposure and thus increasing their popularity in their home country. This can also force them to present their fashion show in a foreign country, which can prove costly.

This research focusses on the following: firstly, on filling the current gap in the literature and secondly, on designing a new conceptual framework to create a digital fashion show. This will enable Saudi fashion designers to promote their work in a low-cost manner and in accordance with the Islamic religion and the customs and traditions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The contribution of this research is the development of a framework to assist fashion promotion in Saudi Arabia.

### **1.3 Aims and Objectives**

The main aim of this research is to provide a solution for fashion designers to promote their designs effectively in order to increase the distribution of their designs and improve market exposure within Saudi Arabia.

In order to meet this aim, the study will seek:

1. To determine the social and cultural factors influencing fashion promotion in Saudi Arabia.
2. To navigate the cultural norms to create digital visualisations to support fashion promotion in Saudi Arabia.
3. To establish acceptable means of female presentation in promotion through the use of interviews, observation and a questionnaire.

4. To identify a simple method to produce a digital fashion show which does not require the intervention of technological specialists.
5. To develop digital visualisations and undertake pilot testing.
6. To develop guidelines to enable Saudi fashion designers to set up culturally acceptable visualisations.
7. To examine the various formats of a virtual fashion show, establishing usability and limitations.
8. To identify the obstacles fashion designers face which prevent promotion of their designs in Saudi Arabia.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

A systemic investigation was undertaken, based on the research aims and objectives, to answer the following questions.

- Could a digitalised form of fashion show be acceptable in Saudi Arabia?
- What are the aspects which help the acceptance of a digital fashion show?
- How can a digital fashion show be created in a manner that makes it acceptable for public showing in Saudi Arabia, whilst aligned with religion, traditions and customs?
- Would a digital fashion show help the promotion of fashion in the Saudi market?
- What are the current forms of promotion and distribution for fashion brands in Saudi Arabia?
- What issues arise for Saudi fashion brands in their promotion and distribution?
- What is the acceptable female presentation via digital media in public in Saudi Arabia?
- Would providing a digital fashion show guideline help fashion designers create a digital fashion show?

#### **1.5 Research Methodology**

The research methodology consists of the method employed to collect data to meet the research aim. In the current study, this was based on the requirements of the



research objectives and questions, including a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods, in order to establish the relevant information to achieve the research objectives.

In accordance with the research questions, as well as the aims and objectives, the research methodology includes the use of interviews, a focus group and the creation of a digital fashion show, and has been employed as follows:

- A preliminary survey (125 responses) was created, to identify consumer preferences when it came to the presentation of the models in the fashion show.
- Cultural leaders (6 interviewees) in Saudi Arabia were approached through surveys and/or interviews, in order to ascertain their opinions regarding the practicability of employing digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia and applying this type of study to the community of Saudi Arabia.
- Fashion designers (5 interviewees) were also interviewed, in order to establish: their opinions of the digital fashion show; their difficulties in setting up their own fashion shows; and their view of the fashion and clothing industry in Saudi Arabia.
- The fashion market in Saudi Arabia was observed through visits to a number of well-known shopping malls, in order to compare the promotion of the local garment brands with that of international brands.
- Magazines (printed and online version) and fashion designers' social media accounts were observed to find how garments are presented and promoted in Saudi Arabia, in terms of physical promotion such as in stores, in printed media such as magazines or in social media.
- The first consumer survey (316 responses) was distributed to establish consumer opinions of the digital fashion show, including what they found acceptable in terms of female presentation.
- The second consumer survey (112 responses) was distributed to determine the final acceptable female presentation in the digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

- A prototype was created using special effects (i.e. the green screen technique), and including various garments, in order to determine the acceptability of various options among key leaders, fashion designers and consumers in Saudi Arabia.
- A guideline was created for the creation of a digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.
- An evaluation of the prototype was undertaken using focus groups to explore its acceptability.

Figure 1-1 demonstrates the current researcher's use of primary and secondary data to build the research framework, which has been divided into three main stages. Stage one focussed on collecting data from the secondary resources, covering the main aspects of the research. The second stage collected the primary data using the following three tools: interviews; questionnaires; and observations. The third stage used both secondary and primary data to develop the research framework. These aspects are discussed in further detail in Chapter 4.

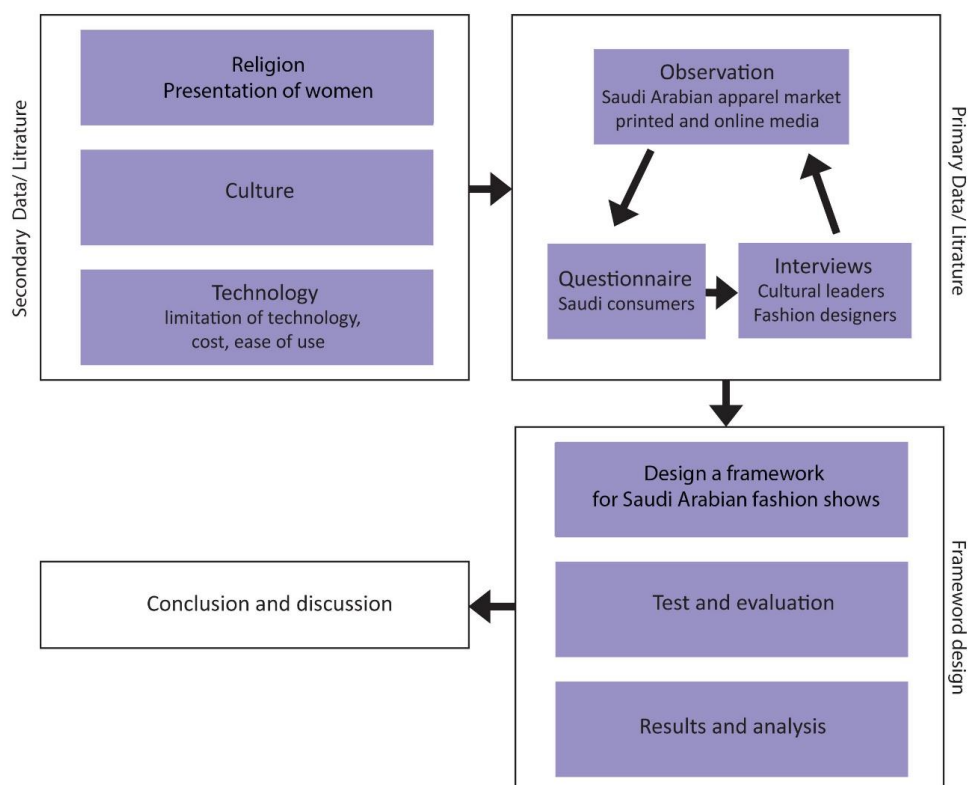


Figure 1-1: Research methods process

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

## 1.6 Thesis Structure

This thesis is divided into ten chapters: (1) Introduction; (2) Literature review; (3) The Saudi Arabia context; (4) Research methodology; (5) Analysis and discussion of qualitative and quantitative data; (6) Discussion of the data analysis; (7) Framework and guideline development; (8) Validation of the framework; (9) Discussion of research findings; (10) Conclusion and recommendations. The main topic discussed in each chapter is outlined below:

**Chapter 1 (Introduction):** This outline: the research background; the problem statement; the research aim and objectives; and the structure of this research thesis.

**Chapter 2 (Literature Review):** This covers four sections. The first section examines the fashion industry, including: globalisation and fashion industry; and changing methods of promotion. The second section outlines the use and presentation of fashion shows, including: digital fashion shows; software development in relation to simulation; fashion shows in the Middle East; and fashion distribution and promotion in Saudi Arabia. The third section focuses on issues of gender and the body in relation to fashion and fashion shows, including: gendered differences in presenting garments in fashion shows; the disparity between Islamic Fashion and European Fashion, with particular emphasis on female representation and the restrictions in Islam on showing the female body in front of men. The final section covers the theoretical framework related to the subject of this thesis.

**Chapter 3 (The Saudi Arabia Context):** This covers the geographical background and the perspective of Jeddah, along with: the role of religion in Saudi Arabia; the history of Islamic dress and changes in clothing in Saudi Arabia; the position of women in Saudi Arabia; the economy of Saudi Arabia; and the garment industry in Saudi Arabia.

**Chapter 4 (Research Methodology):** This describes the research methodology and processes and outlines the reasons behind the choice of each method. The chapter covers: the choice of research methodology; the research strategy; the pilot study; the

evaluation of the credibility of the research findings; data analysis techniques; and the undertaking of the case study.

**Chapter 5 (Analysis and Discussion of Qualitative and Quantitative data):** This presents the collected data from the research tools used in this research (i.e. interviews, questionnaires and observation) and analysis of these data. The chapter covers: the results of the preliminary survey; the interviews with cultural leaders; the results of the observation; the first consumer survey; interviews with fashion designers; and the second consumer survey.

**Chapter 6 (Data Analysis Discussion):** This chapter covers the discussion of the data collected for the research, as described and analysed in Chapter 5.

**Chapter 7 (Framework and Guideline Development):** This chapter covers the description and step-by-step development process of the framework, along with the guidelines.

**Chapter 8 (Validation of Framework):** This chapter covers the testing of the framework and the guidelines by means of focus groups held with consumers, religious authorities and fashion designers.

**Chapter 9 (Discussion of Research Findings):** This chapter addresses the discussion and findings of the focus groups.

**Chapter 10 (Conclusion and Recommendations):** This final chapter outlines the limitations of the research, along with the contribution of the current study and future recommendations.



# Literature Review

## Chapter 2      Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the different stages fashion shows have gone through the years and its evolution in western countries. This is to give a deep understanding of changes in presenting garments to the public. In addition, this segment of the research analyses the impacts of globalisation on the fashion industry and specifically the Saudi Fashion sector. Also, it covers evolution of the digital fashion shows, how new technology has engaged with fashion, how the fashion industry has been digitalised and the advantages of the digital fashion shows. Along these lines, the researcher included an in-depth literature on the role of social media in fashion marketing.

Moreover, it is necessary to understand the background of the Islamic type of clothing and how garments are presented in the Middle East. Also, it is important to understand the Saudi market in terms of how fashion is promoted, what methods are used in promotion. This gives a general idea of the presentation of people in the Arab world. This leads to understanding the culture in Saudi Arabia and the factors facing fashion shows which are the focus of the research. Therefore, this segment of the study presents the background literature review written on fashion shows in western countries in comparison to Middle Eastern countries, specifically Saudi Arabia which is the focus of this study. Lastly, it incorporates a discussion of relevant theories governing the subject under consideration.

### 2.2 Fashion Industry

#### 2.2.1 Globalisations and the Fashion Industry

According to Crane (1997), the success of the international fashion industry lies in the “Think global! and Act local” approach: organisations are willing to present their products across borders to attain marketing opportunities. Nevertheless, there is an assortment of aspects that might influence the organisations to expand their boundaries internationally. Obviously, the economic factor is the most crucial aspect. Similar to other industries, globalisation has also influenced the fashion industry across the globe and

specifically the emerging nations in Asia. In fact, the fashion industries in the emerging countries are witnessing a remarkable growth level. Among these nations, the Middle East can be characterized as the fastest growing market and a preferred destination for fashion retailers. This is because this destination has posted a growth of 10 per cent in the year 2010 and is anticipated to grow in the future years (Friedman, 2017). McKinsey & Co.'s report "State of Fashion 2018" stated that the McKinsey Global Fashion Index predict an increase of the sales of the fashion industry to almost triple between 2016 and 2018 from 3.5 % to 4.5 %, from 1.5 % (Friedman, 2017). Moreover, the fashion companies operating within different countries can swiftly adopt the promotion techniques utilized in the Middle East region. One of these practices is by either by the removal of the female such as in figure 2-1, or by shading the female image or digitally modifying it or other methods.

In Busnaina's (2014) view, the fashion market in Arab region is a unique and promising market. Due to the dual effect of Islamic aspects and Arabic culture, the consumers in the Arab region are unique. For example, some advertisements have been modified to suit the country's customs and traditions as shown in the IKEA advertisement in Figure 2-1. This advertisement has been discussed by a wide range of websites as it is shown that IKEA in Saudi Arabia has applied the Printing and Publishing regulation which are issued by the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs, Resolution No. 3.1.12 in this system stated that "*the publications should not violate the provisions of Islamic law*" (The Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs, 2002), this is applied by removing the female from the image as she is not covering her hair. However, this article did not specify what is exactly meant by "not to violate the provisions of Islamic law", it did not mention what are the lines which cannot be crossed. The reason of removing the female image in any form in advertisements in Saudi Arabia because it is considered inappropriate to show women, even if they were decent in their appearance. This can mean from a western view they might think the role of women in the Saudi society is not important. Also, it can give the impression of the family in Saudi Arabia is based on males only which is not the case in Saudi Arabia. Focusing on one gender in advertisements can impact negatively on the company when considered from a western prospective, but in Saudi Arabia it is

considered as normal behaviour as it is based on tradition. However, this might direct the viewer that men only are targeted to these advertisements and women are not included which leads to a potential decrease in the sales as it could be considered by some as a gender discrimination in which males can be present in advertisements and females are not allowed to do so.



Figure 2-1: An example of changes in advertisements in Saudi Arabia compared to the original advertisement.

(Source: McCabe, 2012)

The global fashion industry can be categorized into three types, including international fashion hubs that encompass Italy, France, UK and USA; growing industries in Brazil, Russia and Singapore; as well as emerging fashion markets in India, South Africa and the Middle East (Larner, Molloy and Goodrum, 2007). Larner, Molloy and Goodrum, (2007) noted that presently, increasing business attention is given to the third category that has observed a significant increase in the amount of purchasing power and the number of fashion events.

#### 2.2.1.1 Impacts of Globalisation on the Fashion Industry

The increase in globalisation has revolutionized the fashion industry. Most importantly, it has presented international markets with low-cost labour that is essential for the creation of the global assembly line that fosters faster as well as cheaper



production of clothing. According to (Beraja, 2016), a successful illustration of the globalisation of the fashion and utilisation of global assembly line is Zara. Zara has nearly 300 in-house designers and effectually utilizes inputs from the store managers all across the globe. Globalisation endows the fashion brands with the abundance of distinctive trends sold by massive retailers. It also allows consumers to purchase a desirable piece of fashionable clothing amalgamated with low price productions. Specifically, globalisation has presented the low-cost labour as well as international markets to the fashion companies that are essential for the creation of the global assembly line that fosters faster and at the same time cheaper production of clothing.

Sarpong, Howard and Osei-Ntiri (2011) noted that the process of globalisation has placed tremendous impact on the international fashion industry. They further highlighted that this impact can be reflected in the change in ways in which the fashion is being produced as well as marketed. Moreover, according to (Ledezma, 2017), globalisation has resulted in the growing integration of the world's economy.

Sarpong (2011) defines globalisation as a social process that has eradicated the constraints of geography on the cultural, social, political and economic arrangement. Similarly, Younan (2008) pointed out that globalisation has increased the internationalisation of marketing, distribution and production of the services and goods and at the same time has resulted in the extension of cultures and politics all across the globe.

### **2.2.1.2 Effects of Globalisation on the Saudi Fashion Industry**

Over the past ten years, globalisation has turned out to be a crucial part of the fashion industry. International fashion producers have taken note of the consumer's consumption patterns and expanded their business accordingly. Luxury global retailers including Michael Kors, Louis Vuitton and Prada have expanded their boundaries in Saudi Arabia which is now turning out to be a key source of economic gains for the global fashion retailers. Similarly, a large number of international fashion brands have discovered Saudi Arabia as the leading target market. Farra (2018) asserted that New York, Milan and Paris are no longer the dominating hub of the fashion brands since the

majority of the fashion retailers are migrating to Asia and particularly the Middle East where the economy is growing at a fast pace. Several brands are considering Saudi Arabia an appealing market because of the desires of the local consumers to flaunt expensive goods. Based on the Royal Danish Embassy's sector analysis report published in 2012, Saudi Arabia attracted more than 40 per cent of the top retailers, this includes more than 50 franchises of international clothes brands (Saudi Arabia: Retail Sector, Furniture, Clothing & Design, 2018).

In recent times, the Saudi market has witnessed a big expansion of consumption of fashion products. The dresses worn by women of the younger generation have become more Westernised. Likewise, the consumers belonging to the middle-class group have become highly global fashion brand conscious. It is useful to note here that Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East region and for that reason, it represents contextual differences along with a rich array of lifestyles. Nevertheless, penetration into the Arab market is problematic since the contextual, as well as cultural aspects, have played a crucial role in shaping the purchaser's behaviour, which is profoundly influenced by the religion, norms and values. Therefore, it can be put forward that globalisation is significantly influencing the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia. This influence can be seen as the type of garments has changed from being traditional garments into more fashionable Western style garments. This is because Saudi consumers are exposed to these designs through the internet as they can surf the websites and social media. This exposure changed the taste of the consumers in garments, which has become more westernised. Therefore, western brands benefit when they sell in Saudi Arabia, as consumers tend to demand and therefore buy what western brands promote in social media.

Saudi Arabia is based on a strong Islamic tradition that compels women to wear the abaya. However, globalisation has influenced the culture in the country since the faces of women that were fully covered have become unveiled. Similarly, the abayas also transformed over time into silk coats that are slightly sensual, full of embroidery, flowing and fitted. Today, women in Saudi Arabia are freely visiting public libraries, walking in

malls, shopping in supermarkets and meeting in restaurants. This is due to the dramatic changes in the rules in Saudi Arabia in the past two years as the country became more open to new ideas and beliefs and the exposure to the western brands through the internet and social media. This clearly affirms that globalisation has placed a significant impact on the cultural diversity in Saudi Arabia. Consequently, the women in Saudi Arabia have expanded their access to international fashion products. Likewise, the women in Saudi Arabia are seeking access to high-end designer clothing as well as makeup products. They prefer dressing in western styles in their female setting. Regardless of the strict rules and dress codes, Saudi women have surpassed the more liberal UAE women to become the largest importer of fashion products (Ledezma, 2017). Hence, it is evident that globalisation has significantly accelerated the use of fashion in the country with the blending of the Western concepts with the Islamic components.

Recently, the country has organized its first fashion show that was led by the CEO of the Arab Fashion Council (Northam, 2018). In the viewpoint of the author of the report, Saudi Arabia is the main hub within the Arab world and it is the most significant market for the Arab region particularly for the fashion industry. The unmatched purchasing power of the consumers, as well as the large population of young adults, are appealing factors for the global fashion industry (Gökarıksel and Secor, 2009). Several international fashion designers took part in the recent fashion event in the country: the majority of them belonged to the Middle East and Europe and a few were from the United States and Brazil. Even the local designers of Saudi Arabia participated in the event. This is considered to be a major change in the garment industry. According to Gökarıksel and Secor (2009) more and more fashion weeks can be organized in Saudi Arabia since the country is embracing globalisation and significant changes occur. However, this fashion show had a special characteristic which made it different from any other Arab Fashion Week: male attendees and cameras were only permitted in the reception and only women were allowed to attend the fashion show. Male fashion designers were not permitted to attend the show. Although the media were prohibited to take any photo in the hall where the fashion show was (Dadouch, 2018), some of the pictures were found on the Internet and it is evident that the garments displayed were characterised by a

sense of modesty, with long glamorous garments as shown in Figure 2-2. Saudi Arabia is moving forward but at the same time, it is still restricted by the costumes and the Islamic religion and by restrictions on the more widespread promotion of fashion imagery.



Figure 2-2: Image from the first Arab Fashion Week organised in Riyadh.

(Source: Fearon, 2018)

### 2.2.2 Changes in Fashion Promotion

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the connection between the image and clothing in terms of using illustrations in fashion advertisements became evident within both British and French publications. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Jules Cheret introduced a colour lithographic poster in France which developed into the popular form of advertisements across the globe. Along these lines, H.G Gray in 1900 developed a poster for publicizing the latest fashion products on sales at the Persian Department store (Leach, 1984). Subsequently, it can be deduced that in the late nineteenth century, the seeds of the contemporary fashion promotion were sown. However, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a noteworthy shift occurred within the promotion of fashion and clothing for men, women and children. During this era, the integration of the top-class designers, the part played by the copywriter as well as the photographers also transformed the concept of fashion promotion and advertisements.

Moreover, the United States has been the pioneer in developing and fostering photographic advertising in the initial era of 1920s. Along these lines, a school of photography was founded by Clarence White in New York. The contemporary style of fashion promotion supported by him was grounded on oblique perspectives, simple geometry as well as sharp focus. Moore (2012) in his research has discovered different techniques of advertisements and concepts such as usage of structure and textures and greatest contrasts. Also, photomontage, photogram and other approaches such as using unfamiliar objects and perspectives are evident in the advertisement of Austin Reed shirts in *Punch* in the year 1933 (Jobling, 2005). Furthermore, the market of youth fashions and teenagers in the mid of 1950s had significantly influenced the sexual iconography of numerous advertisements. Along these lines, since the period of 1960s, the more casual type of dressing became evident on the television (Ewing, 2014). In the late 1970s, the competition among the designer labels and brands become fiercer and consequently, the marketing teams started to sexualize figure-hugging fabrics such as lycra and denim. Despite the fact that Levis are sold worldwide, the promotion of the brand focuses on its American identity rather than showing a multinational approach (Ewing, 2014). On the other hand, Benetton was a company that promoted itself as a multinational firm. The advertisements and promotional strategies introduced by Benetton remain groundbreaking both ideologically as well as artistically (Ewing, 2014).

The digital revolution has significantly transformed the fashion business landscape, transmuting the ways in which the fashion brands reach out their consumers and interact with them (Ko and Megehee, 2012). The advent of information technology has transformed the purchasing habits of the consumers and at the same time the brands ought to respond to these altering demands. Brand image and brand name matters, but it is equally essential for the fashion brands to utilize better strategies to market their products (Hudson et al., 2016).

In the fashion world, both advertising and marketing facilitate companies to generate revenue, as well as drive sales. Whether it is an ordinary fashion brand or a luxury fashion brand, all are required to market their products. However, information technology and

media are playing a noteworthy role in fashion marketing and branding. Email marketing, website marketing and social media can be utilized by fashion brands in order to create an impact on their consumers (Atwal and Williams, 2009). Social media has specifically emerged as the technology that has transformed the way of marketing for the fashion brands. Every fashion brand irrespective of its size is using social media for actively engaging its followers. Similarly, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook are all extensively used to promote fashion brands and products. Information technology and media are considered as effective tools for the fashion brands to reach millions of customers with brands such as Zara and H&M actively using social media channels to promote their products.

### 2.2.3 Fashion Distribution and Promotion in Saudi Arabia

In recent times, there has been significant evolution in fashion distribution and promotion in Saudi Arabia. For instance, the shopping malls in the country represent Islamic fashion as well as Western fashion. Different international brands including Ralph Lauren, Coach, Tiffany and Bodyshop are present in these malls. On the other hand, products from the small local brands are being sold in the private boutiques or multi-store brands (Sandikci and Rice, 2011).

The Islamic rules and regulations are strictly followed in Saudi Arabia and they emphasise the modesty of women. The Islamic practices also restrict combined gatherings of men and women. In addition, women are obliged to wear the abaya whilst out of the house. The obligation to wear the abaya and veil while shopping or doing other activities outside the house shows the obedience of the people to the Islamic tradition (Barras, 2010). In previous times (during the Awakening era in the 1980s), women in Saudi Arabia visiting shopping malls and markets had to be accompanied by a close male relative like a husband, brother or father (Al Alhareth, Al Alhareth and Al Dighrir, 2015).

The demand to veil the female form and use headless mannequins in Saudi malls is again in obedience to Islamic tradition. According to Islam, the female virtue is guarded by veiling it from the view of the public (Sandikci and Rice, 2011), whether that is a human or a mannequin. Further, the principles that guide the window displays in Saudi shopping

Islamic teachings regarding the naked female body as morally corrupt (Sandikci and Rice, 2011), therefore to Islam, the European exposure of the female body in tight or skimpy fashion clothing, lingerie or swimsuits is a polluting or corrupting influence, thus making window displays in shopping malls very restricted. Saudi women wear high street fashion under traditional Islamic abayas as a way to avoid such pollution (Stowasser, 1994).

In Saudi Arabia, specifically, the exposure of female bodies in the form of dummies in shopping malls is strictly restricted. On the other hand, the display of the full-length abaya is permitted since these abayas completely cover the bodies of the women and do not reveal the shape of the bodies (Stowasser, 1994). According to the Islamic teachings, the shape of the body reflects the beauty of the woman (Barras, 2010). Hence, it must be hidden under proper clothes in public areas. Indeed, “the veil” of Muslim women is now considered as the marker of the visibility of the Islamisation of society both in Muslim countries and in the West. Joanne Entwistle (2015) agreed with Stowasser (1994) regarding the perception of the society toward the body of the female and said “*the feminine body is always, potentially at least, a sexual body and women have not been able to escape this association entirely*” (Entwistle, 2015). Therefore, Muslim women are required to wear outer garments on top of any type of clothing which reveals the body except with her husband, brothers, father and uncles.

In 2012, a new law has been brought to the country that requires females to be employed in lingerie and female apparel departments. The law was enforced after females complained they felt uncomfortable buying lingerie from men (Variyar, 2012).



Figure 2-3: Woman working in a store in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Bluwi, 2012)

Nevertheless, in spite of the restrictions, there have been noteworthy evolutions in the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia. The transformations can be reflected in the form of online Islamic fashion stores. The concept of online shopping is not new to the country and in fact dated back to the era of 1990s (Lewis, 2013). However, even at present, the popularity and consumption of online stores is limited in Saudi Arabia. Some of the famous online stores including Islamic Design House, Jelbab, Al-Hannah, The Hijab Shop and Artizara still exist (Lewis, 2013). The majority of these stores sell mainstream Islamic dressing with a wide range of styles. It is relevant to mention here that few of the online Islamic fashion stores prefer representing their clothing range through attractive models whereas others only represent a part of body. The figure below illustrates the garments displayed in the online stores.





Figure 2-4: Garment displayed in the online store.

(Source: Shukr Islamic Clothing, 2016)

Hence, it can be deduced that the chief focus of the online fashion stores is to present their clothing range and other products to the consumers as well as providing information regarding the shipping and payment methods. Therefore, uploading a digital fashion show to these websites can add the value to these garments in which the consumers can see the movements of the garments. ASOS is a good example of uploading videos to their website, showing the model presenting the garment. This gives the consumer an idea of how the garment will look while wearing it.

#### 2.2.3.1 Role of Social Media in Fashion Marketing

Prior to the advent of social media, various stylists, media outlets and fashion designers and all the other facets of the fashion industry were separated. In the viewpoint of different researchers, the evolution of the brands as well as retailers are the result of transition between publishers and brands as well as digital public relation trends (Tiggemann, Polivy and Hargreaves, 2009). The use of social media by the designers to post fashion shows, behind-the-scenes footage, commercials and videos serves as a

human voice for brands. Various fashion brands across the globe utilize an equation of the online mediums that is in association with the social media to present the customers with an insight of a range of perspectives that constitute a brand (Tungate, 2008). In fact, the retailers, as well as the fashion brands, are creatively utilizing social media to establish strong bonds with the customers. Social networking sites such as Facebook allows fashion designers to create official pages and groups that in turn serve as a platform for creating a powerful brand image. According to (Wolny and Mueller, 2013), social media not only serves as an extension of print magazines but also acts as an interactive source for constant fashion coverage. Social media is a platform used to ease communication, share content, build relationships with customers and provide a platform to share brand messages.

The integration of social media with the fashion industry has utilizes the fashion bloggers and the styles as an element of the merchandising strategy of the brands (Shen and Bissell, 2013). The foundation of Zara is laid on the concept of being fashion imitators. The fashion brand is also well-recognized for their capacity for spotting trends. By getting influenced with the social media, Zara has launched their own website named as Zara people, to enable a social media stream of influence for their design (Kim and Ko, 2012).

The advent of information technology has played a vital role in revolutionizing the ways in which the fashion brands interact with potential customers and market their products. In fact, social media and modern media are considered vital platforms for fashion brands to create and spread awareness about their products. To this end, fashion brands are extensively utilizing these platforms to advertise and market their latest and upcoming collections. Hence, it can be concluded that information technology and particularly social media have induced several noteworthy changes in the ways in which the fashion brands used to advertise as well as market their products. It has endowed the fashion brands with the opportunity to more actively interact with their consumers and know about their demands. As social media is an important tool to promote a product, in the case of this research to promote garments, other tools are used as well in the clothing

industry to promote fashion such as fashion shows. These fashion shows are no less important than the social media, but they support each other.

### **2.2.3.2 Smartphones as a Promotional Tool for International Fashion Brands**

The high mobile as well as internet penetration indicates the technological advancements. This increase in usage has impacted the physical shopping behaviors of consumers. Nowadays, an increasing number of the consumers are making purchases through different applications in their Smartphones and tables. Hence, this is a vital opportunity for the international fashion brands to promote and advertise their products without establishing a physical presence in the country (Abaza., 2007). The fashion designers can create customized apps of their brand that can be installed on Smartphones and Tablets. In this manner, the international fashion brands can keep the consumers updated about their products as well as services.

## **2.3 Fashion Shows**

Fashion shows are widespread in the world. The presentation of the collection in the fashion shows varies from one designer to another. These fashion shows are very important for the designer and the clothing sector. Although setting up fashion shows is relatively high cost, they are important for fashion designers as buyers attend these fashion shows and buy clothes to be sold in their stores later. The attendance of the press can advertise the collection either on printed media such as magazines or on television for example (Frankel, 2007). Fashion shows create a link between the fashion designer and the consumers (Natanya, 2017).

Over the history of fashion, fashion shows have passed through many stages. In the eighteenth century, marketing and displays for the work of French dressmakers were by sending fashionable dress dolls around Europe, these dolls are about 75 centimetres high with adult figures and were known as “babies” (Figure 2-8) (Evans, 2013). By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (1820s) men were the first living models, known as “mannequins” at that time, and they started in Paris (Evans, 2013).



Figure 2-5: Mini dolls used by French dressmakers to present garments

(Source: Evans, 2013)

Young male actors were employed to display garments in public places in Paris during the 1870s (Evans, 2013). When fashion started to be interested in female designs, women were employed to work as professional mannequins in fashion houses, this was in the second half of the nineteenth century (Perthuis, 2014). In the mid-1860s, French designer Charles Frederick Worth, who is also considered one of the founders of Haute Couture, decided to show his clothes directly on young girls, whom he called “Sosies” (doubles) (Godart, 2012). The first mannequin, live female model, to be made in the world was his wife, Marie-Augustine Berne. Such innovation was appreciated by the public, and soon, due to the peculiar shows, the designer’s clients became much more (Skov et al., 2009). This is because at that time women started to visit their dressmakers in their stores to watch the female model displaying a series of luxurious garments, which started the need for mannequins as “live female models” (Evans, 2013).



Figure 2-6: Presenting garments in the dressmaker store

(Source: Evans, 2013)

Consumers wanted to see the garments in motion. Therefore, fashion shows started to appear in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first defile show was used by Paul Poiret in 1909. The show looked like this: the models passed in front of the interested clients of the designer in the room, allowing them to look at the outfits. And in 1911, Poiret staged a theatrical show “1002 nights” in his own garden, which, by its idea and performance, was more like modern fashion shows (Evans, 2013). Also, the French designer Jean Paquin had the models walk between consumers in showrooms, department stores and couture houses to display the garments. There was no runway as it is known today but it was in an environment which has a more intimate setting. These shows were held in United States of America and France in the 1880s to 1929 (Evans, 2013).

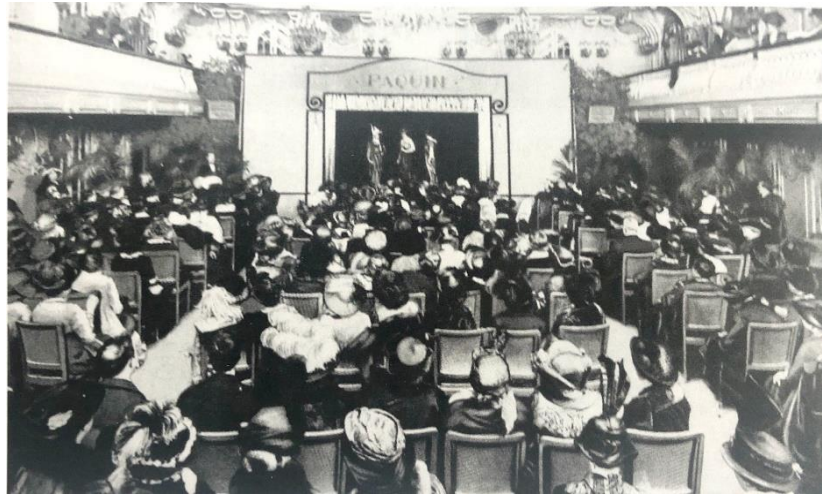


Figure 2-7: Jean Paquin fashion show.

(Source: Evans, 2013)

The Ehrich Brothers' in-store fashion show was the first in-store fashion show in New York in 1903. It targeted middle-class women (Breward, 1995).

At the same time, when fashion developing in Europe resembled more closely haute couture styles, on the other side of the ocean the situation was completely different. The difference was not only the fact that at the very beginning of the twentieth century, American designers were more likely focused on pret-a-porter, but also that the use of fashion shows was developing much more rapidly.

Between 1910 and 1930 department stores used fashion shows as a tool to market garments to consumers. At that time fashion shows were social events, including music, dancing and refreshments and were more theatrical and used themes for each show (e.g. Parisian, Chinese, or Russian) (Fortini, 2006). These shows help to promote the designs and increase sales globally. At this time mass production increased and the style of garments become simpler. This is because the need to offer affordable garments resulted in the decrease of the amount of fabric used to make clothing (Marketti and Parsons, 2007). Also, it resulted the independence of the US style from the European style. With World War II (WWII), Lambert wanted to show fashion designers the American creativity through organising a press week. The moment for the start was chosen successfully,



Europe was in the state of the Second World War and the American fashionistas could not go for clothes from Parisian fashion designers. This propaganda presented American fashion as fashionable, cheerful, streamlined, and ready to wear (Breward, 1995). Magazines like Vogue and Harper's Bazar began to write about these American fashion designs more frequently. In 1943, after organising the press week, the first official "New York Fashion Week" was held (Breward, 1995). The event, which was originally called "Press week", in the first days won not only popularity and love from the public, but also managed to translate American fashion into a completely different level. The perception at the time was that American fashion houses had been influenced in their designs from the French fashion designers- sophisticated style and unconditional elegance.

By the end of WWII, fashion houses around the world started to host more professional fashion shows. In these fashion shows, professional models displayed the garments, professional stylists were employed, and journalists attended. This helped to spread designs to a bigger market and make designers more globally well-known. Christian Dior in the year 1947 turned out to be the first designers to permit the photographers to capture his fashion collection and document it. On the other hand, in the early 1950s, the Italian fashion shows commenced that showcased the couture brands from Capri, Milan, Turin and Rome. This was when Marchese Giovanni Battista Giorgini brought together leading Italian designers in an historic presentation to international fashion press and buyers, which was a success and introduced the Italian fashion to the world (Waddell, 2013).

Furthermore, a group of couturiers in the 1960s including Nina Ricci and Carven started to promote their ready to wear collection prior to the high-end couture collections (Pinchera & Rinallo, 2017). Within the span of a decade, the ready-to-wear collections in US outperformed the haute couture while the runway shows tuned out to be a new promotional medium for the collection of the designers. Between the 70s and 80s fashion designers in US started to setup their fashion shows in clubs and restaurants (Fortini, 2006). The majority of the designers in Paris started to showcase their collections twice from 1973. This gave rise to the schema of Paris Fashion (Pinchera & Rinallo., 2017).

Contemporary shows offerings vary widely in content. It ranges between a luxury shows such as Chanel's and Louis Vuitton's fashion shows to the simpler approach which is favoured by some designers such as Calvin Klein. Robert the son of Couturier Nina Ricci proposed the idea of instigating the fashion brands to devise small version of their designs (Pinchera & Rinallo., 2017). Some fashion designers prefer more interactive events where garments sometimes changed on stage such as Hussein Chalayan's fashion show.

Because fashion has become global, designs can be inspired from other cultures, places, colours and other inspirations such as Elie Saab, Lebanese fashion designer, whose designs adopt the French artistic details and performance in the clothing and runway. Figure 2-8 is an example of this adoption.



Figure 2-8: The adoption of French artistic details shows in Elie Saab Haute couture Spring/Summer 2014 Fashion Show.

(Source: Saab,2014)



### 2.3.1 Digital Fashion Shows

Before defining the term “Digital Fashion Show”, it is important to define the term “Fashion”. A fashion is defined as an appearance which has been accepted by people in a specific time (Mugge, Schifferstein and Schoormans, 2005). (Ma et al., 2012) consider it as the social standard favoured by a group of people which can influence the society to follow them in a specific lifestyle especially clothing. Anne Hollander, the art historian, defines “fashion” as the entire spectrum of attractive clothes styles at any given time (Svendsen, 2006). Estelle Ellis, marketing consultant, described “fashion” as a cultural power which got the strength from different aspects from the culture such as customs, material life, human interactions and the psychology of this culture (Blaszczyk, 2011).

According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2019), the term “Fashion show” is “an occasion where people can see new designs of clothes being worn by fashion models’. “A fashion show is a sales promotion mechanism in the clothing industry and a widely recognized cultural event” (Skov et al., 2009).

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The definition of “Digital” according to Oxford Dictionary relates to using or storing data or information in the form of digital signals. Krimpmann has defined “Digital” as transferring the technology in changing physical motions into a process which can be modified using technology (Krimpmann, 2015). Also, it is has been defined by (Hilma, 2011) as relating to a device which can produce, receive, transfer or display into a numerical form of data.

As there is no clear definition for the Digital Fashion show, the author defines it as a term that describes any sort of fashion show that is processed through an electronic device or programme and using a digital stage instead of a conventional physical fashion show platform. In this particular research, it is proposed that it is a range of technologies

used to produce a fashion show which includes a real model and digitally modified runway using computer software. For the purpose of this research, it must take into account the customs and traditions of Saudi society by covering the model's body either by digital manipulation or by wearing a full bodysuit.

Digital fashion shows and e-commerce have challenged the idea that consumers would not buy non-touchable clothes. In spite of consumers not being able to feel the fabric, online or “digital fashion shows” are very successful and becoming more popular in the fashion sector (Batista, 2013). Fashion sectors in the Western countries are using digital technology for fitting and dressing rooms. These virtual fitting rooms and interactive mirrors are used to create the best possible value and cost prospects (Kim, 2015). However, not all of these fashion shows were successful due to different body shapes and it is difficult to fit all body shapes as each body is different from others in shape and each has to be customised (Kim, 2015). Visualisation can explain the idea more effectively: the creation of customised, made to order designs by using 3D printers allows customers to be free of time, space constraints, models and fashion gatherings. Contemporary fashion retailers are creating “Digital fashion shows” using different technological activities and innovations (Batista, 2013).

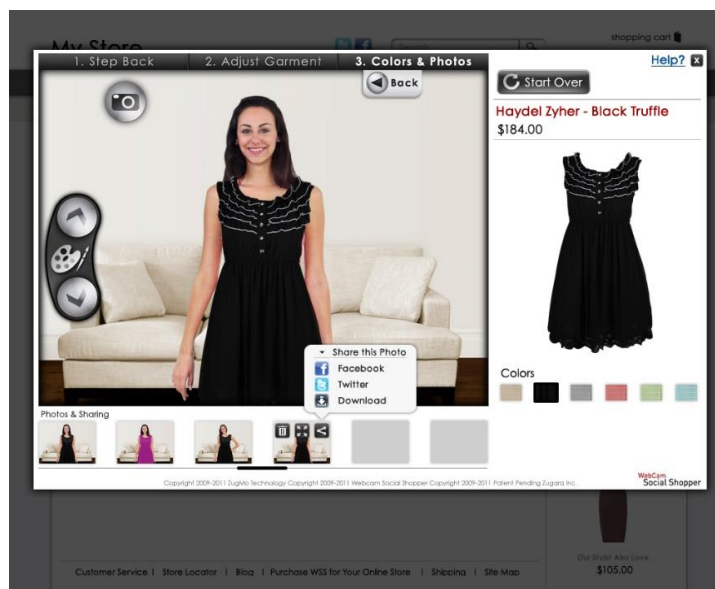


Figure 2-9: Example of virtual dressing room

(Source: poq studio, 2012)

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, fashion designers attempted to create more modernised presentation of fashion shows. The greatest changes in fashion shows have been made by technology. The first to introduce his collection on the network was the Austrian designer Helmut Lang in 1998 and in 2010, Alexander McQueen became the first designer to launch a live broadcast from the show on the network (Fortini, 2006). The trend set by the British then snowballed (Blazquez et al., 2014). Major fashion houses used digital fashion shows to share an inside access to the company and its brands, to watch a live streaming fashion show and allow consumers to buy items directly from the fashion show itself. Guests were given a password to login to allow them to watch the show live on any device such as computers or mobile phones. This system was successfully used in the New York Fashion Week, in February 2012 (Binkle, 2012). It had a pre-taped fashion show, featuring high-resolution digital model images, designer preview, credits and beauty sections (Binkle, 2012).

Social media technologies have also transformed the way fashion is being displayed. Among different social media platforms, Instagram stories are at the heart of fashion world. Designers can post stories on Instagram along with their runway shows. The use of social media presents an opportunity to the fashion brands to capture the attention of large number of consumers. It additionally enables the designers to show the 'first look' of their clothing line and other accessories live on Internet.

Social media can also be used to present garments and fashion shows with the use of digital models. In Balmain's 2017 advertisement, they revealed the images for the digital supermodels (avatars) Shudu, Margot and Zhi (Figure 2-10). Responses from the industry were between supporters and opponents for these models. Alice Temperley believes that the digital models will lower the costs to present garments, and it is useful to be used online for selling purposes (Gumuchian and Powell, 2018). However, these models raise the question of whether what the viewer is seeing is real or not. This corresponds to the simulation argument that the reality we are living in could be simulated to the point that we cannot distinguish between reality and simulation (Baudrillard, 1994). For all these point of views, the realistic digitalised fashion shows give

a good impression to the viewers, as the elements in the visualisation almost gives a real feeling of how the garments are draped in real life. Also, uploading the digital fashion show in different websites gives a chance to consumers around the globe to know the latest designer's designs faster, as accessing the digital fashion shows can be from anywhere through the internet. Therefore, fashion designers benefit by increasing sales.



Figure 2-10 : Example of digital models

(Source: Balmain's New Virtual Army, 2018)

### 2.3.2 Evolution of Digital Fashion Shows

In the recent times, technology has transformed the fashion industry. For instance, Instagram has turned out to be the main platform on which the fashion industry depends. In fact, it has now become inevitable to focus on the digital sphere due to its impact as well as its convenience. The application of technology has not only transformed the way fashion looks but has presented another dimension to fashion. Several technologies are being extensively utilized in the course of fashion and fashion shows (Wang, 2010).

For many years, the main invitees for fashion shows were editors of fashion magazines and purchasers. This is because it was the only place to watch the new collection of the fashion designer. These fashion shows have a limited number of seats

which hosts a limited number of guests. Sometimes different fashion shows are held at the same time, and for visitors it was hard to decide on which fashion shows to attend that offered them the best buys. Digital fashion shows such as live streaming allowed the fashion designers to present their collection to a wider audience in different parts of the world. It also helps the fashion designers to give a detailed image of the piece of clothing displayed for audience. Journalists will also have access to the show (Binkley, 2012).

### **2.3.2.1 New Innovations in Fashion Shows- Digital and Real Modelling**

In recent years, there have been many changes in the fashion industry in terms of displaying garments. An emerging trend is to use live streaming of fashion shows, with designer brands such as Burberry using digital technology in creating their fashion shows (Binkley, 2012). Therefore, fashion shows have not only changed the design and style of the garment but also how they are presented. Although Western societies adopt the modern fashion industry, Middle Eastern Islamic countries are not very enthusiastic about representing semi-naked bodies, especially women in the public (Balasescu, 2005). The Middle Eastern culture expects that the presentation of women should obey their rules of modesty, so the Western female presentation has become a sensitive issue for fashion designers with many Middle Eastern clients.

Fashion designers use social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter to upload digital fashion show formats. It has been used as a communication tool for their collection. According to Socha (2009), Louis Vuitton and Kanye West's brand used social media in promoting their collection through Rodeo Drive, who took advantage of using social media to promote these brands. These brands have discovered the advantages of using online tools to market their products and brand.

Ralph Lauren's 4D digital experiences since 2010 (Figure 2-11) are a good example of the incorporation between fashion and digital technology which the fashion industry is witnessing. According to Business Wire (2010), this experience, which was in London and New York, used a video mapping technology. Art, music and fashion was combined with a light show, with these lights captured from fifteen scenes. The models and polo players

were projected flying in a space above the audience. This shows the usage of virtual images by using digitalised models to display the collection.



Figure 2-11: Ralph Lauren's experience in digital fashion show

(Source: Ralph Lauren, 2010)

Another successful experience of using the digital technology in a fashion show was for the Burberry fashion show in Beijing November 2011. According to Farrar (2011), the fashion show consisted of models to present the collection, technology to create the virtual effects and illusions. Models were appearing and disappearing magically on the stage and in some cases, they turned into dust or cloud (Barrett and Jacob, 2011). A hologram was used to create the illusion of rain and snow. Also, it was used to create a lifelike model of the real models. This Burberry show is an example of using holograms as a digital technology in their show (Figure 2-12).



Figure 2-12: Burberry's digital fashion show

(Source: Taylor, 2013)

Nanyang Technological University's Digital Fashion Show 2012 in China was a good example of using technology such as the use of imaging, simulation, computer and 3D semantics in a fashion show. The auto-stereoscopic technology with special glasses allowed the audience to watch the show in 3D. The university made use of the latest technology and glasses to allow visitors to view virtual 3D objects of a robot and virtual humans on screen. The robots and virtual humans made interactive artistic performances, where the robot and virtual humans dance to music.

In spite of these developments, Aagerup (2011) indicated that consumers would rather watch real live models presenting garments when marketing for fashion (Feiereisen, Broderick and Douglas, 2009).

#### 2.3.2.2 Use of Digital Fashion Show within Social Media

Fashion brands use different social media channels to create a relationship with the consumers. The technology collects data about the consumers' location, their favourite



pieces of garments which they like to buy and their method of shopping, allowing customers to shop directly from their social media account (Kim & Ko, 2012). The technology makes it possible for fashion designers to create moving images and bring them to life. This creates an effective communication with consumers on a large scale. The technology enables fashion brands to display fashion shows digitally and live to consumers (Kim & Ko, 2012).

In recent times, live streaming has turned out to be a crucial element of fashion brands marketing research. Social media on different social media platforms allows the brand owners to gather email addresses of potential customers. They can further collect different types of information through social media such as the colours and looks that were most popular by the regions and the most demanded. Along these lines, the data obtained through social media significantly influences the decisions of the fashion brands (Ananda, Hernández García and Lamberti, 2015). For instance, Minkoff, a famous brand owner, stated that they had a pair of trousers that were initially not required by the buyers. Nevertheless, when they were showed the social reactions and the comments of the bloggers, the buyers were attracted towards the trousers (Ananda, Hernández García and Lamberti, 2015). According to brand owners, the streaming of fashion shows on different digital media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram have a direct impact on the sales (Ananda, Hernández García and Lamberti, 2015). In fact, brands such as Tommy Hilfiger have started to incorporate shopping buttons on live streaming on Facebook and Instagram. This allows the viewer to purchase the items that are similar to runway pieces from the main websites. One of the significant benefits of live streaming of fashion shows on social media is the creation of a shared experience, demonstrating that someone in Japan is viewing the same thing as in New York or London (Rocamora, 2017). Based on the positive effects of live streaming of fashion shows, which is considered as a digital form of fashion shows, it is an effective way to link and connect with consumers fast. Brands are looking for methods of increasing their sales and gaining more consumers and buyers in different countries around the world, while the application of new technology in presenting garments helps in attracting consumers and makes them excited about what's new.



Topshop is one of the leading clothing brands across the globe. In recent times, the brand has extended its boundaries into digital runways by launching a Spring as well as Summer collection on Facebook instead of in the London Fashion week (Strassel, 2014). This initiative was made to appraise the concept of digital fashion that presents direct access to the customers. It also reflected the significance of social media within the fashion industry (Kannis, 2014). It has been observed that the majority of the Topshop consumers share their views about the new fashion collections on the digital platforms of Topshop as well as on their Oxford Circus store (Donatiello et al., 2018). These digital channels of Topshop also enable the customers to show their own looks by utilising the hashtag of the brand. Topshop had also planned to install triple screens in its stores that will display the images from the consumers and Instagram images. The combination of these designs will represent the first fashion show created by Instagram images. Similarly, Rent the Runway designed another exceptionally innovative fashion show on the internet (Joannou, 2014). Apart from producing digital fashion, the global clothing industry is utilizing innovative three-dimensional technologies for unique fitted clothing. Topshop has integrated this innovation that allows the buyers to try on the clothes digitally prior to purchasing them. Figure 2-13 demonstrates this innovation.



Figure 2-13: Topshop Virtual “Fitting Room” Technology

(Source: Topshop in Moscow had a virtual fitting room on trial, 2013)

### 2.3.2.3 The Advantages of Digital Fashion Shows

Due to their wide-ranging advantages, it is anticipated that the popularity of the fashion shows will escalate because of the diminished costs and the benefits and ease they offer. Digital fashion shows have played a significant role increasing the profitability of the designers as well as manufacturers. In fact, it has made the designer clothes and accessories more affordable for the consumers by incorporating economies of scale phenomena (Luchev et al., 2013). This can be further explained in the light of the phenomenon that the higher the demand, the greater will be the production while the lower will be the cost of manufacturing.

The advancements of technology along with the increased sales and manufacturing of the clothes has restored the economies of several countries for the reason that the majority of the brands at present outsource their manufacturing, in order to fulfil growing demands (Kim and Ko, 2012). Therefore, it can be put forward that digital fashion shows have devised a new concept of fashion and generated millions of employments in apparel and hi-tech industries. Some of the popular brands including Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Topshop and Burberry have used digital fashion shows to promote their collection (Rocamora, 2017) (Figure 2-14). Despite the fact of intense competition among these designers, they acknowledge the significance of digital fashion shows as well as digital marketing. They strongly believe that these shows generate large amounts of revenues.

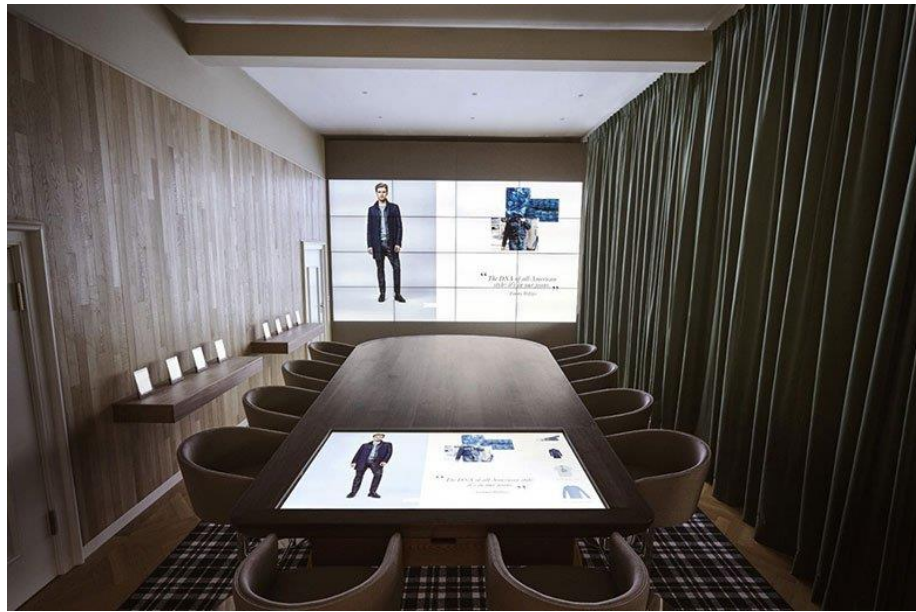


Figure 2-14: Tommy Hilfiger digital showroom.

(Source: Business Wire, 2015)

They consider digital fashion shows as the turnaround strategy for boosting profitability since large number of consumers on social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, view these shows and present their feedback. The digital fashion shows include live streaming of different fashion styles on different social media platforms and in-store for special clients (Rocamora, 2017).

Fashion weeks target the consumers using all digital channels to reach consumers and increase sales. Burberry's London September 2013 fashion show contrasted craftsmanship with digital technology (Rocamora, 2017). It introduced a series of activities as well as week-long publication. The whole line of clothing items displayed in the fashion show was immediately shoppable. Therefore, it can be put forward that digital technologies have transformed the ways in which fashion shows are executed and products bought as a result. Along with Burberry, other brands including Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger and Tom Ford had also proffered their own shoppable runway collections at New York fashion week (Rocamora, 2017).

Previously, there would be a time lapse of six months between the fashion shows and the accessibility of the designer clothes in the department stores or boutiques across the globe. However, this backdrop was soon covered with the evolution of digital media that has transformed the runway shows into these strong consumer marketing events. The chief executives of this group of leading fashion brands strongly believe that the changes made in their fashion shows will allow them to establish a strong connection between the experience that is created on fashion shows and the moment when people can physically explore the connections. The customer business cycle was that of purchasers analysing new collections during the fashion shows and placing the orders following it. However, the integration of technology with fashion shows has provided a completely new experience to the customers. Burberry is one of the first luxury brands to embrace social and digital media while presenting ground-breaking runways on Youtube, WeChat and Facebook (Siddiqui, Mannion and Marciniak, 2019). On the other hand, small-scale brands have also started to test the new faster fashion model to determine its impact on the sales. British designers including Oliver Spencer and Alice Temperley are utilizing the social media platform Vero in order to allow their fans to purchase the design from their collections displayed in recent fashion shows. Alice Temperley highlighted that this strategy had enabled the brand to establish a closer relationship with their customers (Siddiqui, Mannion and Marciniak, 2019).

There are different strategies and methods for production of each fashion show. Hence, the brands are paying increasing attention on the right strategy for every show. The rising popularity and success of digital fashion shows have fostered numerous manufacturers of consumer products to frequently host such fashion shows with positive outcomes. According to the fashion experts, the digital fashion show is a novel innovation within the fashion industry (Cugini, Bordegoni, & Mana, 2008). These shows have revolutionized the way in which the fashion is displayed. Hence, it can be deduced that digital fashion shows have a promising future and they are now regarded as a permanent element of the fashion industry and clothing brands (Cugini, Bordegoni, & Mana, 2008).

### 2.3.3 Development in Software Relating to Simulation

Increasing awareness among the consumers combined with technological advancements and globalisation are critical indicators that govern the needs of various industries to replace or update manual, labour-intensive operations with novel innovations. Fashion, apparel and textile industries are no exception since they have also witnessed tremendous growth with the integration of computerisation as well as automation at each phase (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010). The inclusion of the computers in the rapid growing competitive environment is beneficial as far as time-saving, cost-effectiveness and productivity are taken into consideration.

The first stage of garment production is garment designing and evolution of the computer graphics as well as 3D technology have transformed the way of designing the garments. Prior to the advancements in technologies, garment design was carried out by sketching on papers. However, different software tools are now available for fashion designers to express their ideas (Boonbrahm et al., 2015). Computer systems allow fashion designers to construct two-dimensional as well as three-dimensional product visualisation and product illustration with several CAD systems introduced for the visualisation of garments within the clothing industry (Zhang, 2015).

Generally, clothing industry CAD systems comprise of five key procedures that include pattern prepositioning, 2D pattern design, virtual sewing process, design modification and drape simulation. The 3D body measurement is grounded on the 3D garment digital technology (D'Apuzzo, 2007). The 3D pattern designing is carried out through a 3D pattern design system and the shape of the body directs the whole process. This system not only incorporates the standard mannequin but also utilizes models selected or created by the user. In this manner, the use of the physical mannequin can be replaced by the virtual mannequin within the fashion industry.

#### 2.3.3.1 From 2D to 3D CAD Systems in Garment Designing

3D body measurement forms the basis of 3D garment digital technology. Following the advancement of the 3D scanning techniques, it has become relatively easy to capture

the individualized human body and model it by means of mesh models (Spahiu et al., 2014). In addition, 3D pattern designing can be performed through the 3D pattern design system and the design created through it originates from the body shape. There are a few shortcomings of this system: for instance, the initial costs of buying a computer system is always high. In addition, the information stored in this system can be lost or corrupted if any issue takes place. Furthermore, the recurring costs of software updates are extremely expensive as well as time-consuming.

### **2.3.3.2 3D Simulator**

The functioning of the 3D simulator is grounded on a practical-based approach. It incorporates all the essential elements required for importing a 3D human body model utilized for the designing of garments in 3D (D'Apuzzo & Gruen, 2009). In addition, the 3D simulator positions and at the same time assembles the 2D patterns over the model by utilizing the data. Furthermore, it performs the simulation process.

### **2.3.3.3 3D Body Scanning**

3D body scanning is another extensively utilized technology in the fashion industry for producing a 3D model through scanning. During the 3D body scanning process, the person stands within the scanner's view while the scanner captures the body images as well as produces a 3D image of it in a few seconds. The scanner comprises an array of light sensors that are used for generating a three-dimensional image (Apeagyei, 2010). The images in the scanner are captured over 360 degrees, that encompasses the human body surface as well as body measurements. This technique is extensively utilized in customisation of apparel where the measurements of the customers are taken in 3D. Furthermore, with a digitized image available on the computer screen, the customer can select the dress that goes with their style and choice.

The advent of 3D body scanning has revolutionized the tailoring of garments in the fashion industry. Previously, the manufacturers were constantly faced by issues of fitting, since people are of distinctive sizes as well as shape (Istook & Hwang, 2001). Consequently, they required more precise information to produce perfectly fitted

garments. In a nutshell, the advancements in the field of information technology have significantly facilitated the manufacturers and retailers through the introduction of 3D body scanning. This technology is deemed to be more practical today and it is utilized by large stores to impress the consumers as it provides personal-fit garments (Xu, et al., 2002). However, 3D body scanning is not without challenges, specifically because some of the scanners require users to wear undergarments for successful scanning. Moreover, there are image-based issues associated with it since breathing or other body movement can impact the final scanned image.

#### **2.3.3.4 Virtual Fitting Room (VFR) Applications**

Virtual fitting room (VFR) applications are capable of generating a precise body fit that in turn ascertains the quality of fitting (Pachoulakis & Kapetanakis, 2012). Correspondingly, several purposes can be served through these 'Body Shape' IDs such as the creation of accurate 3D avatar type models of the bodies of the consumers. The virtual fitting room application, by efficiently addressing the fitting dilemma, presents exceptional opportunities for retailers in different aspects of fashion (Townsend, 2004). The assurance of the shopper of perfect fit clothing eradicates the purchasing barriers for online shoppers as well as resulting in decreased return rates and increments in sales.

The virtual fitting room entails a large screen that plays the role of a digital mirror and displays the live video feed of the users. On the other hand, the individual must stand in front of the screen that records all these body movements through the Kinect camera. Furthermore, the customer can choose the clothes as well as accessories he or she wants to purchase while the screen displays how they look on him (Protopsaltou et al., 2002). Additionally, the customer can move around, bend or turn at different angles to view how he looks in specific clothing. Subsequently, the real-time screen records the movement of the customer. The unique feature of this technology is that it allows the customer to customize the clothes as per their needs. Along these lines, the patterns of three-dimensional clothing models can be altered as required and at the same time the size and colour of the clothing can be changed. In addition, the virtual fitting technology also enables several other customisations for the clothing models.

### 2.3.3.5 Fitness

Augmented Reality (AR) technology integrates an interactive virtual fitting room that makes use of the Kinect sensor as the three-dimensional device that fully captures the body of the consumers while standing in front of it. It further incorporates the floating buttons that enable the consumers to browse the collection as well as virtually try the garments of their choice (Sabina, 2014). These floating buttons can be controlled by a body gesture. Additionally, the software utilises the three-dimensional models of garments to ensure a more convincing experience for the consumers (Spanlang, 2005).

### 2.3.3.6 Pattern Adaptation

Initially, the purpose of developing different computer programs and software was to upgrade garment patterns. At present, there is a large system that incorporates features for altering as well as designing patterns according to the fitting and size of the customer. The information technology is an extremely essential tool for increasing productivity and accuracy and to manage information (Tyler et al., 2012). It has also supported product development, pattern construction and clothing design to be integrated into a constant procedure. The evolution of the computerized digitizer instigated a revolution in the garment production process. A typical system carries out two main functions, namely marker planning and pattern grading along with other options available. For pattern visualisations and adaptation, digitizer tablets or graphics tablets can be utilized. A typical digitizer consists of a special pen called as a stylus and a mouse-like a device known as a puck (D'Apuzzo & Gruen, 2009). The latter tool consists of an array of buttons as well as a lens with crosshairs that allow the customer to select the images with increased precision. The pucks and the pens can be either wireless or attached to the digitizer tablets through wires or cords.

### 2.3.3.7 The Invention of Special Effects

It was important to the moviemakers to entertain the audience and amaze them. Therefore, they were curious to find techniques to make static images move. Early movies did not match the audience standards which made the moviemakers create new



techniques to amaze the audience. As expectations have raised, moviemakers continue to develop more techniques to exceed the viewer expectation to make this industry grow more.

By 1910, filmmaking had become one of the largest industries in the American economy (Rickitt, 2000). Gunpowder was used to create explosions, cigar smoke was blown in front of the camera to create the effect of battle drifting smoke and other tricks used in making movies (Rickitt, 2000).

The later part of the last century (since the 1970s) was marked by the active use of green and blue screens in the process of filming. The technology was most in demand in television weather forecasts, when the presenter was filmed on a plain background, and then the chroma key background was replaced with various map images (Rickitt, 2000). Today, the accuracy of chroma key opens up new possibilities for the film industry, saving huge costs from the work of installers, decorators and designers - creating a computer background is much easier and cheaper.

At the initial stage of development, blue was used as the primary colour: the turning point was the end of the 1970s when blue backgrounds gradually began to be crowded out by green ones. In many ways, the hero 'Superman' suggested this idea to the professionals: his blue suit required the use of a different background. Thus, Christopher Reeve was one of the first actors who worked with a green screen rather than the traditional blue screen. Both blue and green are the most distant from the skin, which facilitates the work with the replacement of backgrounds. At the same time, there are some differences, in view of which there was an advantage in favour of the green shade. This type of technology is used for a whole variety of purposes to create a setting by which it might present information and entertainment. It also provides a good technical approach to present digital fashion shows.

#### **2.3.3.8 Holograms**

Hologram technology involves video recording of the stereoscopic information of an object by the means of laser beam interference. Bhardwaj & Fairhurst. (2010) described

the hologram as a ray-stereoscopic image which records the full image of the object. Holography technology came into the limelight and it is still extensively utilized in numerous fields (Crewe, 2013). Furthermore, the unique feature of holography is to reproduce a complete 3D image so that it can be viewed in a similar manner to the actual object. In fact, the hologram is considered as the most efficient 3D imaging technology in contrast to others (Crewe, 2013). One significant attribute of it is that there is no information loss and at the same time it is possible to record numerous holograms in a single location.

The theoretical principle of holography is grounded on the concept of interference as well as diffraction (Chuah et al., 2016). On the basis of these principles, an assortment of holograms has been developed by physicist Steven Benton in the year 1968 and since then its applications have widened up and the first one was the pseudo-hologram technique (Saxby and Zacharovas, 2015).

A noteworthy application of hologram technology is in the fashion shows. Pinar and Viola had initiated a holographic fashion show for demonstrating their virtual fashion line reflected on the real models at the Amsterdam 2016 Spring/Summer Fashion Week (Chuah et al., 2016). In these fashion shows, the holograms are projected on a transparent screen situated at an angle of 45 degrees. Furthermore, the enhanced reality systems such as HoloLens often utilize the Holographic Optical elements in order to create video projection that can be viewed at a comfortable distance (Chuah et al., 2016).

All of the technologies mentioned above require professional experience to be able to produce a digital fashion show. Also, there are no packages available to create a digital fashion show for SME fashion designers yet. Therefore, there is a gap in the market and this research helps to fulfil this gap.

#### **2.3.4 Fashion Shows in The Middle East**

In the Middle East, fashion shows are increasingly prominent and even Saudi Arabia has embraced it. Nevertheless, the runway fashion shows that have happened in recent times in Saudi Arabia have faced serious criticisms from the religious scholars and general

public (Lewis, 2013). This is because that they are bound by religion, customs and traditions that prevent the appearance of women Indecently in front of men.

Fashion shows in Islamic world have faced criticism for the reason that scholars argue that women are obliged to protect their physical appearance (Stowasser, 1994). They further point out that the fashion shows taking place in the Islamic countries tend to alter the teachings and rules of Islam to display clothing that reflect western ideologies. As per the teaching of Quran reflected in Sura 24:31, the head of the women ought to be completely covered with the piece of cloth often referred to hijab. It must also encompass the upper part of the throat and chest extending up down the knees (Stowasser, 1994). However, it has been observed most fashion shows in Islamic nations such as in Middle East reason are grounded on liberalisation and westernisation ideologies that do not compel the female models to cover their head. Similarly, it has been observed that the contemporary hijab displayed in the fashion shows or other platforms does not fully cover the upper body and throat of the women (Lewis, 2013). Thus, they fail to meet the Islamic requirements. Furthermore, the dresses displayed in the Islamic fashions are fitted to the bodies of the female models; however, in Islam such type of dressing is strictly prohibited.

The Islamic scholars argue that Western fashion standards glorify and at the same time objectify the bodies of females (Krause-Wahl, 2009). Hence, in spite of designing long Islamic dresses, the contemporary designers overlook the fundamental traditions Islamic clothing. The religious scholars further argue that the garments displayed in the fashion shows are in general created from light materials instead of heavy material (Krause-Wahl, 2009), which women cannot wear and display in front of men. This is also against the fundamental teachings of the religion. Regardless, of the criticism and the restrictions, massive attention of the global viewers has been placed on the Hijab styles exhibited in the digital and online fashion shows. For paradigm, “The Hijab” was the first extensively viewed digital fashion video on the YouTube. The chief purpose of this video was to demonstrate the beauty of Hijab and refute the stereotype that regard the hijab

as an oppression to the Muslim Women. In the similar vein, another digital fashion video was released on YouTube that showed accessories, which can be carried with the Hijab.

However, in June 2018 Saudi Arabia broke all the rules of fashion shows. Female models were replaced with drones which featured clothes from some of the world's most expensive designers including Dolce & Gabbana Dolce and Gabbana's fashion show which took place in Jeddah Hilton hotel. These drones showcased the dresses this is because of the restrictions applied to women within most feedbacks toward this fashion show were negative, where the show was likened to a ghost show (Cliff, 2018).



Figure 2-15: Replacing models with drones in a Saudi fashion show.

(Source: [BBC News عربي](#), 2018)

### 2.3.5 The Disparity between Islamic Fashion and Western Fashion with Respect to Female Representation.

There has been always a tense relationship between Islam and fashion, primarily because Islam's eternal values, as well as virtues, do not harmonize with the fashion concepts. In Islamic countries such as Yemen and Saudi Arabia, females are permitted to wear fashionable dresses in female settings or family circles where they are not required to cover. Nevertheless, in recent times, adopting Western styles of dressing and at the same time discarding face-veils had gradually spread within a few states of the Middle East (Akou, 2007). Along these lines, several movements emerged that gave rise to a uniform and sober style of covering the body. Hence, in a very short span of time, the

Islamic fashion emerged out of austere, simple as well as distinctively non-fashionable forms of Islamic dress. In the era of the 1990s, the Islamist trend turned out to be more heterogeneous since it partially transformed from an anti-consumerist radical movement into a more individualized reformist movement. The greater heterogeneity within the Islamic styles has created a strong presence of Islamic aesthetics within the public sphere. It is relevant to mention here that new styles of fashion and dressing in the Islamic countries did not develop in opposition to revealing Western styles of dress.

In Western fashion, women are not restricted in revealing their body in fashion shows or other occasions. They are allowed to wear revealing outfits at fashion shows to attract the public. In fact, in the Western fashion show, females are often represented as the symbol of sexuality (Hansen, 2004). On the other hand, Islamic countries do not encourage women to wear clothes that reveal their body in public events such as fashion shows. The fashion shows in Islamic countries such as Indonesia or Dubai present women with modesty. Women in Islamic countries consider wearing strict forms of veiling as the religious technique and practice of self that facilitate them in becoming more modest as well as a better Muslim woman.



Figure 2-16: Jakarta's Islamic fashion show

(Source: Norma, 2017)

## 2.4 Theories Related to the Research

Theories are a set of definitions, concepts and propositions that help to explain and understand events or situations in a systemic way. These theories make it easier to understand the underlying reasons behind the events. Based on the Oxford Dictionary (2019), a theory is “A supposition or a system of ideas intended to explain something, especially one based on general principles independent of the thing to be explained”. Therefore, it is important to explain some theories related to this research in terms to understand the reasons behind each behaviour. These theories are fashion theories, diffusion and innovation theory, consumer behaviour theory, national identity theory, gender theory, the conspicuous consumption and Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. These theories give us a deep understanding of how fashion is spreading among cultures and the reaction of the society toward it.

### 2.4.1 Fashion Theories

Various theories have been proposed and explored to understand and explain the reason or motivation behind why people dress themselves. Lawan and Zanna (2013) did a comprehensive review of the early theories on why people first wore clothing. This showed that some of the early theorising and field work reflected the influence and bias of evolutionary thought. Therefore, it is important to examine critically the theories emerging from these earliest writings and to consider them in the context of the times in which they were developed. They identified four basic instinct theories of motivation, but they are thought to be too cumbersome to be useful: modesty theory (Biblical explanation of clothing): to conceal the private parts of the body; immodesty theory: to display the body to attract others; adornment theory (anthropologists around the turn of the century): to use the decorative nature of clothes and other forms of appearance modification for the purposes of display; protection theory: to protect against the climate or insects. Lawan and Zanna (2013) developed a list of ways in which clothing, in some time or place, protected individuals from various kinds of fears, including fear of ridicule, fear of being judged as inefficient, immodest, poor, lacking good taste or self-respect, fear of being unattractive and fear of skin irritation or discomfort. (Bruce and Daly, 2006)

asserted that people wore clothes also because of needing to please their own or the opposite sex, dressing to appear prosperous, enhancing their best physical assets, or showing modesty. Cohen (1981) indicated that the desire to conform to the clothing of others was the most frequent or pervasive motive indicated and even overlapped with some other motives such as modesty. Clothing not only serves individual, social, psychological and physical needs but also is a cultural representation and art form. Symbolic interaction is a perspective that some sociologists, G.H. Mead for example, considered to explain fashion change and clothing behaviour (Miller, 1943). It focuses on social processes related to how meanings are constructed and reconstituted in everyday life. Evans (1989) expanded on the idea of interaction as a process of people sharing meanings and fitting their lines of action together and emphasized that social interaction should be studied as a dynamic process, rather than as a static entity. He also asserted the concept of collective selection to explain the phenomenon of fashion change. In the article on 'Appearance and the Self'. Azevedo et al. (2008) linked appearance and, more specifically, clothing, to how individuals are socialized in a society and how appearance is a factor in the development of their self-concepts. Pentecost and Andrews (2010)'s perspective of dramaturgy focused on strategies people use when they present themselves to others in social interaction. This perspective emphasized the use of clothing as a "costume" that enables individuals to assume social roles with some degree of credibility in the various regions of daily life. Phau and Lo (2004) explored how people used appearance as a cue to attract each other and what effect the cue had on the responses and how they reflected actual attitudes. The study of how cultural meanings are conveyed and transformed through dress is a field of semiotics that takes in the cultural perspective.

According to Bigne (2005), a clothing fashion was "a style of dress that is temporarily adopted by a discernible proportion of members of a social group because that chosen style is perceived to be socially appropriate for the time and situation". Fashion is reflected in the styles of dress in relation to silhouette, design details and materials, influenced by social forces, cultural forces, historic forces as well as economic forces.

### 2.4.2 Diffusion of Innovation Theory

Roger's (2010) Diffusion of Innovation theory described and explained the spread of a new idea or product over the time and how it become popular in the society. The process of innovation consists of several stages, including knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation. The knowledge stage incorporates explaining the function of the innovation. In the decision stage, decisions are made concerning the adoption of innovation as well as its implementation (Kaminski, 2011). Lastly, the confirmation stage is grounded on the outcomes. In the viewpoint of Roger (2010), adoption corresponds to the decision of complete utilisation of innovation as the best course of action. Likewise, diffusion corresponds to the procedure through which the innovation is communicated via specific channels among the members of the social system. (Alsharif, 2013) defines the diffusion process as the spreading of a new idea from its source to users. The four key components of this theory include social systems, time, communication channels and innovation (Lyytinen & Damsgaard, 2001). Roger noted that the consequences of innovation could create uncertainty: therefore, individuals must be informed about its benefits and drawbacks.

In terms of fashion, this spreading may occur due to any of the diffusion theory mechanism such as trickle-down theory, which has been described by Veblen (1899) in his conspicuous consumption theory where the idea is adopted in the top strata of the society and then it starts to become accepted in the lower strata (Trigg, 2001), or trickle across theory, where fashion is moving horizontally within the same social class (King Jr, 1963), or even the trickle up theory, where the idea is spreading from the lower class and flows to the upper-income groups: this diffusion of new design styles and innovations is what we call 'fashion' in the garment industry. However, the spread of any product or idea globally has to be promoted to different countries and cultures, which can help to spread the fashion and improve the economy. The work of Roger facilitated in establishing a clear model for the adoption of innovation that has been recognized and at the same time utilized by a range of industries seeking a way to predict the potential success of an innovation (Abrahamson, 1991). Furthermore, the diffusion of innovation



within the social system can be described as the set of interrelated units that collectively function to achieve a common goal.

Benders and Van Veen (2001) studied the characteristics of fashion followers at various stages in the cycle of a new style, with the purpose of understanding how early adopters of styles could be influenced. The assumption underlying this is that, if “innovators” and “fashion leaders” can be appealed to, to buy more with effective marketing and advertising procedures, they will, in turn, influence other consumers to adopt a new style. These innovators, who can be also called influencers, can influence their followers either to accept or reject a product. In Saudi Arabia these influencers usually use social media to get in contact with their followers from different ages. These followers have become highly brand aware due to the advertisements done by the influencers.

The fashion industry in Saudi Arabia is regarded as the social system that comprises of suppliers, manufacturers, consumers, brands as well as retailers. The structure of the social systems and controlled behaviours of its members either positively or negatively contribute to the diffusion and adoption of the new innovations in the fashion sector. There are several factors that influence the adoption of innovation by the customers such as perceived risks, perceived costs and perceived value (Ho and Ko, 2008), for instance, if the consumer perception is that the new innovation is more valuable in contrast to the existing products. Innovations with perceived value are more likely to be adopted by the consumers. By applying this theory to the Saudi consumer, if new fashions from the West are perceived as carrying risks of negative peer response or being considered immodest, they may not be adopted, while if they are perceived as of value, they are more likely to be adopted. Similarly, the technological innovations in promotion of a digital fashion show may be adopted due to the economic benefit, brand enhancement value and convenience, if potential risks are mitigated. This will be discussed in detail in section 3.4.1.

### 2.4.3 Consumer Behaviour Theory

In the current era, marketing is viewed as the part of science as well as art. Several theories constitute a marketing strategy and these theories are grounded in economics, psychology and researches within the human behaviour. The most crucial aspect of the marketing study is the consumer behaviour that determines why the consumers act or buy. Along these lines, the consumer behaviour theories address critical issues including the role of emotions within the purchasing decisions, purchasing habits of consumers in groups and individually, of object utility as well as post purchase attitudes.

An attitudinal model proposed by Fishbein (1975) has been extensively utilized within the marketing context. This model enables the researchers in analysing the factors that influence the purchase intentions and adoption of the consumers (Evans, 1989). As per this model, intention is the predominant factor that influences the behaviour of the consumers. Other factors include perceived behavioural control, subjective norms and attitudes. Nevertheless, Fishbein's model is limited to the adoption and does not take into consideration other aspects that underscore and predict consumer purchase behaviour. On the other hand, the prime focus of the expectation confirmation model is on the post purchase behaviour. This model is extensively used to explain consumer repurchasing and consumer satisfaction. The central component of this model is dissatisfaction that is created by the gap between perceived performance and expectation. In the viewpoint of Park et al. (2006), consumers who are satisfied reflect greater propensity to repurchase the same products. Azevedo et al. (2008) noted that culture plays a noteworthy role in shaping human behaviour. The impact of the culture is so prominent that it influences the choices and motives of consumers while shopping. In fact, Pentecost and Andrews (2010) pointed out that culture is one of the main factors to determine the consumer buying behaviours. Moreover, several internal factors such as personality and values have an impact on the daily lives of the individuals.

According to the social psychology, concepts including social sanctions, social cues, peer pressure and social rewards affect consumer behaviour (Phau & Lo., 2004). The concepts explain that consumer behaviour occurs within the groups and in the presence

of other individuals. The field of physio-psychology also explains consumer behaviour and it determines the extent to which behaviour is caused by chemical as well as physical phenomena. As per the standpoint of Bigne et al. (2005), psychological and cognitive procedures originate from the physiological ones. The purchasing decisions can be affected by those accompanying the buyer, either if the buyer were accompanied with friends or a family member. This is particularly the case in Saudi Arabia, whether the buyer is financially independent or dependant on their male counterpart or husband to pay for the products. This is because the Saudi society is considered a family-based society in all things, and even if the person is married or financially independent, that does not prevent the family from intervening in some decisions. Therefore, a digital fashion show might be a solution to promoting across the sexes as the garments can be seen before buying the garments and gives an idea how it will be look when wearing it.

Most people identify fashion primarily with the field of appearance in relation to clothing and adornment. Pentecost and Andrews (2010) thought that the broad presence of fashion influence has shown in consumer behaviour, with the use of products to express self-image, role position, or feelings toward others. It also indicated preference shift and formation as opposed to static preference. To respond to Park et al. (2006)'s view that most fashion theories did not specify a detailed structure of concepts, variables, and relations, Bigne et al. (2005) developed a formal theoretical framework to try to integrate previously proposed fashion theories by other scholars. Cohen (1981) suggested that, though individuals tend to adopt styles in congruence with the fashion, each individual appears to behave somewhat randomly in the vicinity around the underlying trend. However, Joergens (2006) found that fashion has very fast style changes and is accelerating despite the advancements in production and distribution of fashion. He also discovered increased within-year variance in style changes. This result was attributed to the increased participation in the fashion process by a greater variety of consumers in terms of needs and wants, as well as the way of mix-and-match in dress. Actually, this fast-changing fashion trend also resulted from more effective and aggressive marketing and mass media communication which stimulated more consumer involvement. Therefore, Bruce & Daly (2006) asserted that fashion had its historical

continuity which was primarily seen in the most basic and broad fashion trends, but these trends were not necessarily cyclical in nature. Based on the fast changes in fashion, fashion designers have to be updated with the latest trends and technology, because these technologies help to create effective visualisation which can attract the consumers. Also, promoting the products using the internet helps to reach the consumers faster, which results in selling more and income increasing.

#### **2.4.4 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory elucidates how individuals are fulfilling their fundamental needs. This theory can be represented in the form of a pyramid that constitutes five levels of needs, including the fundamental needs for survival, the need for safety, the need for social acceptance/ belongingness, psychological needs including status and esteem, as well as the need for self-actualisation. In this particular research, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs will be discussed in the context of fashion consumers. The first level of the pyramid exhibits the fundamental elements in the lives of the individuals such as physiological needs including clothing, food and water. To this end, every individual requires clothing to survive in everyday situations. Once the fundamental needs of the individuals are accomplished, they look for the safety needs. As per the standpoint point of Alam et al. (2011), there are rational motives behind the safety needs and basic needs. This implies that the buying decisions of the consumers are driven by care or price. After the fulfilment of the safety needs, individuals start to desire for recognition. For instance, people buy clothes that accord with social and peer requirements, to become the part of the group: this includes buying modest clothes and wearing the abaya in Saudi Arabia where this a dress code in the country and its wear is considered essential to be recognised as a part of this society. The emotional motives of the individual also drive the clothing purchases of the consumers. Along these lines, emotional motives encompass status as well as social acceptance. Furthermore, the quest for status and self-esteem directs the individuals towards couture clothing and high fashion. In this phase, individuals are striving for high status and want to reflect it through expensive accessories and clothing. The need for self-actualisation takes the top position

in the Pyramid. However, not every fashion consumer reaches this stage. People aspiring for self-actualisation want designs to be exclusively designed for them. This corresponded to what has been mentioned in section 2.4.5: the Saudi society trend to buy luxury brands to show how wealthy they are, to increase their self-confidence. In addition, customised designs give the impression of uniqueness: this can be easily daily seen in Saudi Arabia where customised luxury fashion is widely utilised for high status occasions, which gives a self-confidence for the women which fulfils their self-actualisation need.

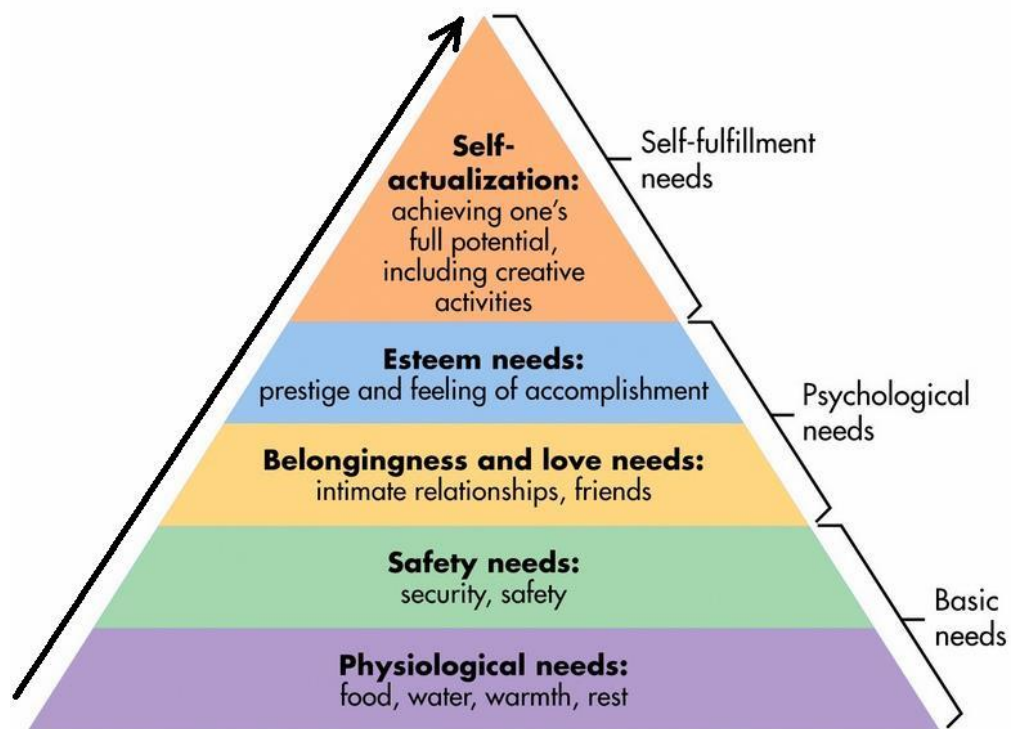


Figure 2-17: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

(Source: Champion, 2017)

#### 2.4.5 Conspicuous Consumption

Conspicuous consumption has been described by O'Cass and Frost (2002) as the possession as well as the display of costly products by individuals in order to inflate the ego, attract attention to one's wealth and suggest affluence. Conspicuous goods are consumed because of their capacity to satisfy material needs and social needs. In the viewpoint of O'Cass and McEwen (2004), social comparison is the key focus for the

consumption decision. In a different context, individuals buy various items as per their perception of what is usual for their references. Podoshen and Zhang (2011) revealed how conspicuous consumption has transformed from an exclusive behaviour to mass consumption. However, O’Cass and Frost (2002) noted that conspicuous consumption has turned out to be more sophisticated as well as exclusive due to its various symbolic implications.

In the opinion of Podoshen & Zhang, (2011), individuals with superior fashion desires but less money can now intend to compete with people with absence of taste but money. This relates to Pierre Bourdieu’s argument in which people compete to reach a better social level through the use of methods to distinguish them in the field and from other economic classes (Bourdieu, 1998).

The concept of ‘fashionability’ is associated with product style and design, and at the same time, it fulfils the aesthetic role. Studies conducted in recent times support the dual perspective on conspicuous consumption. For instance, according to O’Cass and Frost (2002), both price and design could be regarded as conspicuous symbols. On the other hand, Podoshen and Zhang (2011) opined that luxury which is the most prominent feature of conspicuous products could be symbolized by beauty and price. Conspicuous consumption is obvious in Saudi Arabia. As the market is full of luxurious brands, individuals are competing to buy these items in order to satisfy themselves that they are not from the lower class. In addition, some tend to buy replicated brands: this happens to attract attention to one's wealth and increases self-confidence. Loans could be one of the facilities which helps individuals to enable them to present themselves as in a higher financial status in comparison to others. Because consumers are buying these luxury brands, their tastes and thoughts have changed. They have been influenced by what they use or wear: this influence will be discussed in Section 3.4.1. This influence gives the designer the incentive to compete with international brands in their designs, thus gaining the trust of consumers.

#### 2.4.6 National identity

National identity reflects a sense of belongingness in the existence of an individual. Huddy and Khatib (2007) believe that national identity is imagined and at the same time constructed. He claims that national identity depends on shared culture, cultural community and uniformity. Kelman (1997) explained it as a system of beliefs, values, assumptions and expectations that are transferred from one person to another, which may include the transfer of customs and traditions. Also, in the viewpoint of Huddy and Khatib (2007), all identities can exist with their differences. Along these lines, national identity is an exceptionally complicated and multi-dimensional matter.

As per the standpoint of John and Gillis (1996), the belonging and closeness to a person's home significantly influences the national identity of the individuals. This is because an individual views home as a place of warmth, intimate solutions and present memories. Davis (1994) noted that the construction of national identity can be referred to as the process of labelling in which the individuals attach labels to others. He put forwarded the sub-forms of national identity including private identity and public identity

In the viewpoint of Smith (1991), nation is central to modernity and evolves according to the context. In the recent times, it is observed that Saudi women embraced fashion and a desire to construct their own identity.

#### 2.4.7 Gender Theory

Gender theory can be referred to as the study of the feminine, masculine or queer behaviour in the context of society, community and other contexts such as health sciences, religion, education, sociology history and literature. The term gender refers to the categories of masculine and feminine behaviours, roles or societal expectations. On the other hand, the term sex corresponds to the biological observable human body (Shields, 2008).

There are two noteworthy perspectives regarding the origins of gender differences in relation to human behaviour. Gender differences are the reflection of naturally evolved tendencies: this is termed biological essentialism (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007). This

perspective considers gender as part of nature or the essence of one's social as well as biological make-up. By contrast, Smedley and Smedley (2005) view gender disparities through a social constructionism approach and as a reflection of dissimilar societal positions occupied by men and women. They believe that culture as well as social structure had constructed the gender roles. The aspects such as gender, class, ethnicity, religion and race play a noteworthy role in the construction of self-identity.

#### **2.4.7.1 Differences in Roles between Both Genders**

According to Risman and Davis (2013), gender roles have been grounded on distinctive expectations that groups as well as individuals have based on the society values, based on their biological characteristics and sexual orientation. Eccles et al. (1990) noted that gender roles are the product of interactions among individuals and their environments and they guide individuals on what type of behaviour is appropriate for their sex. The theory of gender role socialization chiefly assumes that both women and men receive distinctive gender role socialization. Good et al (1989) argue that men have traditionally undergone a socialization procedure in which they are taught that their essential role in life is to be the breadwinner and worker in the family. While women are inculcated in the belief that that their main role is of a homemaker, mother and wife. Women adopt mutual or feminine qualities, for example, communicating emotions and aptitudes identified with thinking about others. Men, then again, create manly qualities that empower them to be effective in the workplace, for example, intensity and activity (Hoffmann et al., 2004). Hence, it can be deduced that men would be inculcated with the expectations as well as stereotypes linked with the masculine gender role socialization whereas the women would adopt expectations as well as stereotypes related to the feminine gender role socialization.

#### **2.4.7.2 Gender Role Perceptions in Saudi Culture**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is an Islamic Monarchy established in the year 1932 with a population of more than 30 million (Gole, 2002). According to the Global Gender Gap and World Economic forum (2018) report, Saudi Arabia is ranked at 141 out of 144



countries for gender parity. In Saudi Arabia, only 13 percent of the population are women. Nevertheless, in the recent times, the number of employed Saudi women with professional careers is escalating. According to Islamic principles, human beings belonging to both the sexes have similar origin and for that reason, they should be endowed with equal rights (Costa et al., 2001). In the Islamic teachings, there are no rules existing that prohibits women in seeking employment. Younos (2011) pointed out in this regard that if an Islamic government restricts the women from working, they have violated the Islamic laws and teachings. Furthermore, the Islamic principles and rules have endowed the women and men with the same duties as well as rewards. Both men and women according to the Islamic laws are equal before the law and receive the same punishment for any misconduct. In addition, both the genders should be given equal access to education and learning. Taking into consideration this aspect, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology has been launched in Saudi Arabia with the first co-educational campus. Also based on the report published by the Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia for the academic year 2016-2017, the total of Saudi university students was 1,602,569 students, of which 774,233 were females and the remainder are males (Ministry of Higher Education, 2019). This shows that the Saudi government is giving both genders a chance to receive higher education.

Saudi Arabia is one of the richest countries across the globe and has acquired modern infrastructure, transportation and public health services. However, disparities still exist in terms of gender roles, since the majority of the people in the country still believe that the role of the women should be restricted to the household activities. On the other hand, men are considered as the breadwinner of the families. In fact, still the majority of the decisions in Saudi families are made by the men while women are obliged to follow them.

#### **2.4.7.3 Gender and the Body in Relation to Fashion**

With different types of pressures to be perfect in today's world, it is obvious that people will easily become unhappy with their own body and personality, as the media has been portraying all types of ideal images of a perfect body through multimedia and mass media communication. If one looks at the images presented in the fashion

magazines from past decades, there were women of all sizes and shapes. However, if one looks at a fashion magazine or social media site in today's world, all the women portrayed are extremely thin and tall (Wynn, 2012). Our society and media, both, have started casting out those people, especially women, who are not fitting the ideal beautified image (Muth & Cash, 1997). There is a growing concern as to the way body dissatisfaction and perception about the perfect body may lead to low self-esteem, eating disorders and other mental and physical health problems. Moreover, Lirola and Chovanec (2012) identified that female self-image is based on the perception that their bodies are imperfect, hence they need to constantly improve and fix them. The fashion magazines' and social media exploitation of having thin body shapes, particularly among females, is putting significant pressure on women of all ages. The stress to look thin and have an ideal body shape perceived as acceptable by the society is leading to low self-image and body dissatisfaction (Dittmar, 2009).

According to numerous research articles, there is a clear distinction between the clothing of men and women, which signifies the social construction of disparity in gender identities that surpasses the biological sexual difference (Sweetman, 1999). Dressing and decorating the body is an experience shared by all cultures, an act that is part of the social order and is carried out within the limitations of a certain community and its rules. Even if we do not have the interest or concern to follow the established formal dress codes and meet the expectations of others, as a result of our inclusion in a given society, we have voluntarily or involuntarily internalized their dress code and we adhere to them unconsciously every day. Fashion, according to some authors such as Veblen (1899), is an instrument that a certain class adopts to demonstrate its distance from function and its purchasing power, by discarding clothes when still in good condition. Condemning fashion, studies and activities that revolve around it for being a futile manifestation of vanity would imply that the world has to be organized solely around utilitarian values and at the same time prevent us from observing our relationship with the dress and the adornment of the body and what is the importance of the above in our daily life (Turner et al., 1997).

Frith and Gleeson (2004) noted that an individual's dress is most directly in contact with the human body and hence, it is viewed as an intrinsic part of the self. Garments influence as well as shape the appearance and at the same time place a noteworthy impact on the construction of social identity.

According to Pierre Bourdieu (1998) in his work *The Male Domination*, the gender system represents a social construction that includes relationships of power, practices, beliefs, values and norms based on sexual differences, which society embodies in a package stereotyped and naturalized that it reproduces through different systems, while the process of male domination over women has been produced and legitimized by existing institutions. Gender is a cultural issue that refers to the classification social "masculine" and "feminine" identity and role, which is constructed over time.

Over the past 30 years, there have been significant changes in cultural values and this process has intensified with time. Clothing illustrates the ideology of the fashion designer that of wearers and ultimately the culture itself. Even though the concept of fashion is socially superficial, it is not sociologically insignificant. Fashion has a great impact and at the same time, it extensively influences the social structure by the means of formation of distinctive identities including gender.

#### **2.4.8 Restrictions on Showing the Female Body in Front of Men in Islam.**

Historically, the religion of Islam started in Arabia as a revelation to humanity by the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). There are a variety of female behaviours expected in Islam. Women are often expected to be respectful and modest. Furthermore, Islam has always been known to appreciate women's femininity as well as regarding her as playing a major role. The women following this religion are required to wear 'Hijab'. According to Ghodsee (2008), hijab is considered to be a modesty principle and comprises of dress and behaviours for both females and males. One of the most noticeable "hijab forms" is the covering of the head, which is something that the majority of Islamic females wear. In one of the famous schools of Islamic thought, hijab refers to "complete covering of everything except for hands" (Zolan, 1987). Muslim women need to observe the 'Hijab' in the presence of any man they could theoretically marry. The evidence on the topic of

hijab is abundant globally, with debate on why women should wear hijab and whether the hijab is oppressive to women. Most of the people argue that hijab is considered to be an instrument for controlling the sexuality of females. There continues to be the extensively negative attitude, for instance, that women not covering their hair are somehow unchaste. Females are at times advised to wear hijab for their own protection against getting harassed sexually.

Given that Islam is a complete religion and modesty is a fundamental element of it, modesty in the context of clothing is a crucial component. Within the Islamic teachings, there are several requirements and at the same time several prohibitions related to clothing.

Essentially, the awra, which describes the part of the human body including the intimate parts of the human body and which is different from men to women, ought to be covered in Islam (Harkness and Islam, 2011). However, the style as well as method significantly varies from one country to country. Islam also makes it obligatory for Muslim women to cover their private parts (Kılıçbay & Binark, 2002). On the contrary, it is strictly prohibited for Muslim women to wear clothes that fail to cover the body parts or which are transparent. In the same vein, it is prohibited to wear clothes that are tightly fitted on to the body, particularly those parts that sexually attractive. The standard components of Islamic clothing for women include loose fitting, non-transparent dresses and head covering.

Furthermore, Islamic teachings require Muslim women to be careful regarding her appearance, to maintain her dignity and dress in a decent manner. As per the Islamic point of view, clothing serves two purposes: to cover the body as well as beautifying appearance.

## **2.5 Chapter Summary**

Fashion shows give the opportunity for designers to show their creativity to the public. Fashion shows have been changed through the years. The digital world is growing and the fashion industry is engaging in it more and more. This engagement took in

different forms such as virtual rooms, mirrors, models and fashion shows. some of these practices were a success and a few were a failure.

Saudi Arabia is keeping its Islamic identity in its dress code for both males and females. However, with the modernisation of Saudi Arabia, dressing has changed and Western clothing has started to be adopted. This is more noticeable on men and children's wear because women are covered by the loose wide-fitted abayas. These abayas were in black only but now are available in different colours, not only dark but also bright colours, as fashion becomes more Westernized.

Because of this modernisation, Saudi fashion designers started to create their own designs inspired by Western fashion but modified to fit the Islamic religion and the Saudi culture. However, the local Saudi Arabian fashion industry is newly growing. New fashion designers with limited budgets are facing difficulties in showing their collection to the public due to the restriction of the government. Fashion shows in Saudi Arabia take place in a single gender audience, female only, due to religious cultural and governmental restrictions. This situation makes it difficult for stakeholders or male buyers to view the designer collection to order and sell these products.

The next chapter gives an overall idea about Saudi Arabia, to have a good understanding of the Saudi culture and changes in some regulations related to Saudi women in the country.



# The Saudi Arabia Context

## Chapter 3     The Saudi Arabia Context

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the contextual background to this research i.e. the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), with particular reference to Jeddah city, in which this study was located. It discusses the main features of Saudi life, in order to establish the context for the practicality of employing digital technology to enable the staging of Saudi Arabian fashion shows. This includes the interaction between culture, traditions and religion in the kingdom, and in particular the role of religion and its influence on women and culture.

The chapter commences with a review of the geographical and economic situation, followed by a discussion of the role of religion and the position of women, along with an overview of the Saudi garment industry.

### 3.2 Geographical Background

KSA is viewed as the native land of the Arab peoples. It is also the homeland of Islam in which it started and spread from the Arabian Peninsula. The country is bounded by the following countries: Jordan; Iraq; Kuwait; Qatar; the United Arab Emirates; the Sultanate of Oman; Yemen; and Bahrain. It is bordered by the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba to the west and the Arabian Gulf to the east. KSA includes Rub Al-Khali, the largest continuous sand desert in the world, while its extensive oil region lies principally in the east, along the Arabian Gulf.

#### 3.2.1 Jeddah Perspective

Jeddah is the second biggest city in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the main city of the western province. The city's geographical position places it at the heart of the region (Momani and Fadil, 2013). It has the biggest harbour on the Red Sea and holds the majority of Saudi commercial transportation. It is the entry for Islamic pilgrims on Hajj and Umrah to the holy cities of Makah and Al Madinah,

Jeddah is the most open-minded (liberal) and multicultural of Saudi cities due to its historic role as a port that receives millions of pilgrims of many ethnicities (Pavan, 2017).

A number of these pilgrims stay in Jeddah and become citizens of the city. In consequence, life in Jeddah becomes somehow different from other cities in Saudi kingdom and is more diverse in its culture (Davidson et al., 2007).

### **3.3 Role of Religion in Saudi Arabia**

Islam is the religion of Saudi Arabia and loyalty to Islamic rules and ideals is dominant and recognised in Saudi culture. As mentioned in section 3.2, Islam started in the Arabian Peninsula, in particular, what is known now as Saudi Arabia in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, and in consequence the establishment of the two Holy Mosques of Islam were set in Saudi Arabia and are the target of Muslims from all over the world for pilgrimages. Saudi law is based on Islamic law derived from the Holy Quran. It is essential to mention here that there are some traditional and cultural rules that have influenced the societies' life and found its way into the legislative system in the country and became part of it. Saudi politics are strictly linked to the Islamic religion, which clarifies the conservative nature of the Saudi culture (Al-Rasheed, 2010). The interaction between religion, traditions, and culture is a significant factor in founding contemporary Saudi Arabia and affects the features of life in the country (Cassell and Blake, 2012). Thus, the subsequent section will discuss these factors.

### **3.4 History of Islamic Dress**

It is notable that Islamic dressing can be traced to the Arabian era. This was a time before Islam (before 610 CE). During the Arabian era, men wore the 'Izar': this is a wrap on the shoulder in the form of a 'Cloak' (Figure 3-1). In addition, Arabs in pre-Islamic times wore styles adopted from the Eastern Hellenistic world. As a result, this era was marked by a number of typical pieces such as wraps, tunics, and mantles. They also had various headdresses styles and varied forms of 'Sandals' and 'Slippers' (Stillman, 2003). Women in the Arab culture came to the public completely covered with mantles, only leaving one free eye to see (Stillman, 2003).





Figure 3-1: How to wear the Izar.

(Source: Dawson, 1994)

The Arabian clothing was significantly changed by the start of Islam and the coming of the Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H). Even though the new Islamic dress was based on initial regional dress codes, there were further moral sensibilities added on the clothing. As explained by Stillman (2003), the Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H) and other contemporaries adhered to the initial Arabian fashion since they considered it functional, suitable and simple for the Arabian culture. However, the Sunnis, who were urban dwellers and the largest of all Muslim communities, constantly changed their dressing from the time of Umayyad. This was the time of the second of the four key Islamic caliphates created after the death of the Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H).

Since the era of the Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H), the basic dressing for everyone in the Muslim culture comprised of a gown, body shirt, undergarment and a long dress/tunic, together with other wraps or mantles as well as footwear and headgear (Bullock, 2002). People are not strict on what to wear because these garments are worn based on individual economic means, the weather and occasion. There was also clothing consisting mainly of a fabric piece that wearers wrapped around their bodies: this was associated with the desert people or the Ahl Al-Badw (Stillman, 2003). To differentiate men and

women in the Islamic culture, there were different ways of wrapping fabric accompanied by different accessories, fabric types, colours and decorations for both genders.

It is also worth noting that Muslims wore different robes and tunics over their undergarment: this was known as 'Qamis' that resembled modern day t-shirts. In addition, there was the 'Jubba' or 'Thawb', which was a long- or short-sleeved gown worn to cover the 'Qamis' as shown in Figure 3-2 (Chesler, 2010). Further, the Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H) wore the 'Qaba': this was a red luxurious sleeved robe, was made from brocade, had buttons, and had a slit in the front. At this time, both genders were expected to wear mantles when going out in public. 'Ridaa' was the men's mantle while 'Jilhab' and 'Khimar' were the mantle for women (Bullock, 2002).

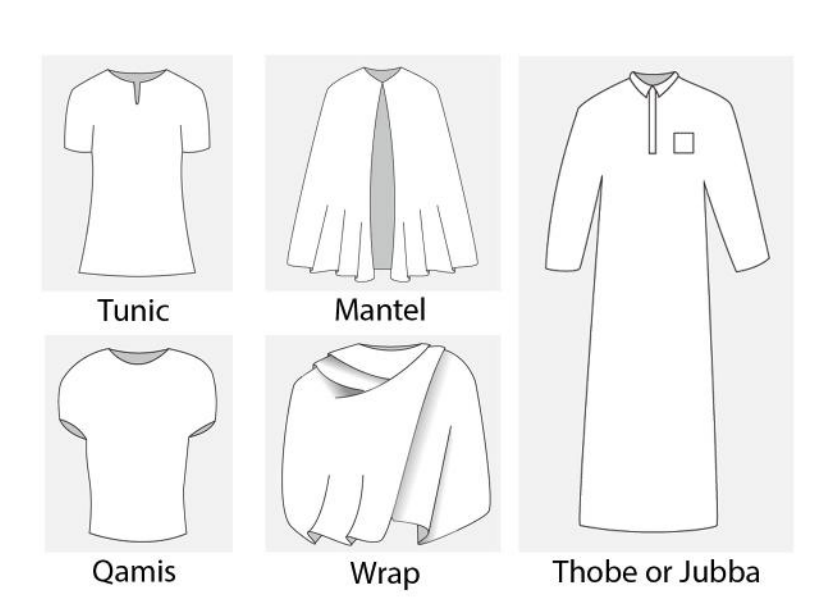


Figure 3-2: Men's clothing in early Islamic times.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Since the era of the Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H), covering the head was considered a sign of respect and modesty for all genders. As a result, this tradition continues in various countries to date. For the men in the Arab population, the traditional headgear had three major parts. The first piece was the skullcap, referred to as a 'Kufiyah' hat as shown in Figure 3-3. The second part was a large square head cloth known as

‘Ghutra’: it is folded diagonally to form a triangle shape on the head, over the skullcap (Stillman, 2003). The second part could also be in the form of a red and white herringbone patterned cloth known as ‘Shumagh’. The third part is a black, circular rope-like binding known as ‘Iqal’.



Figure 3-3: The traditional headgear for men in the Arab world

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

As earlier discussed, the original dress code for Muslims was created aligning with the law of the Holy Quran. When designing the type of dressing, Hadiths quoted the Prophet Mohammad’s sayings and thus supported the need for modesty and austerity in dressing. The prophet did not allow men to wear items that looked too ostentatious such as gold rings, striped fabric imported from Egypt incorporating silk, garments from silk and tanned hides (Bullock, 2002). As a result, luxury fabrics were introduced later in the reign of the Umayyad Caliph (between 661 and 750 AD). This was the time Muslims were allowed to wear special and expensive stones as well as different metals for making

jewellery. Thus, the Umayyads established colourful and special silk fabrics used in Islamic attire such as 'Ridar', 'Imma', 'Izar', 'Sirwal' and 'Jubba' as shown in Figure 3-4.

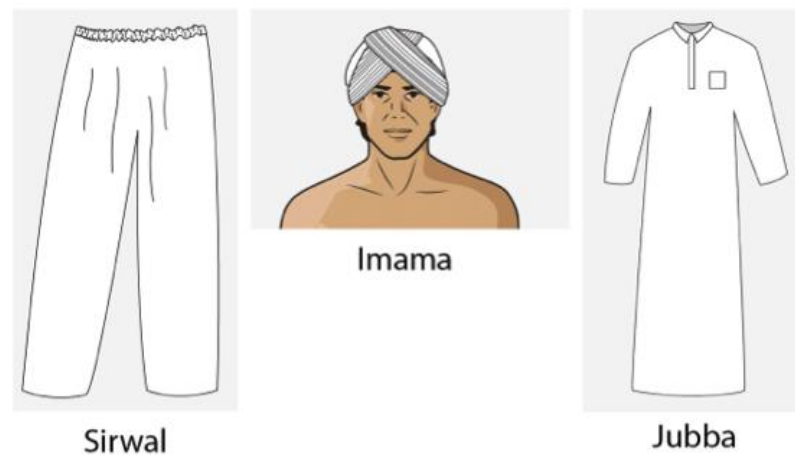


Figure 3-4: Other parts of male clothing in the Arab world

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Since the time of Arab history, Muslim females were required to cover and be veiled in public. This led to the most common headgear for females known as the 'Hijab'. Currently, this type of clothing is depicted as a long-plain black headscarf (Breu and Marchese, 2000). In addition, as a result for increased demand for propriety, there are strict Islamic dress codes that require women to be completely covered in facemasks (Bullock, 2002). The facemask is known as 'Tarha' or 'Burgah' and is usually a sheer black veil. The commonly used face veils are the 'Qina', this is a rectangular fabric piece covering the head and falling down over the face like a curtain (Stillman, 2003). The second type of a face veil was known as the 'Litham': this is a piece of clothing that covers half the face from the nose.

The third type of clothing was the 'Burqu', a fabric that is suspended over the headband centre to cover the face completely but with an eye opening (Breu and Marchese, 2000). These types of facemasks are slightly different based on the Islamic tribe or region of the wearer. According to (ElGuindi, 1981), the veiling of Muslim females in the early Islamic era was not as strict as in the current era. A good example is explaining

using the case of Jahili women who did not cover their faces when presenting themselves to strangers (Bullock, 2002). Additionally, being without a veil was linked to a 'Hasir', which is an expression that refers to a soldier without armour.



Figure 3-5: Litham: one of women's face veils.

(Source: Alamy, 2016)

Currently, Muslim women's clothing comprises of wearing the Hijab, which comes in various forms. Hijab is simply defined as a scarf that covers the hair of a female (Hawkins, 2011) as well as her chest, ears, and the neck. It is notable that in the traditional Islamic society including in KSA, the Hijab is in many forms including being adorned with whimsical ornaments, berets, and pillbox hats worn over a veil (Hawkins, 2011). The Hijab is also used to represent a wide range of Muslim attires for women leading to the new generic term of 'qua' that refers to modest garments. The 'qua' can be used to refer to high-necked, ankle-length, bulky and long-sleeved robe or long-sleeved blouse that is worn with a tight-belted and long skirt. This is accompanied by a head veil and is sometimes tailored with elegance or coloured. The current form of the Hijab is a pious clothing type that is more preferred by affluent society members when compared to the style used in the past. In the current society, the Hijab qua is a vital dress code by

members of the middle class to differentiate them from the uneducated and lower-class women who wear more traditional dresses (Hawkins, 2011).

From today's Islamic teachings, women are not strictly guided on what to wear. However, they are expected to remain modestly dressed thus being able to wear varied styles of dresses in public (Rangoonwala, Sy and Epinoza, 2011). Modesty is about covering a female's legs and arms, avoiding makeup and adornment, wearing loose clothing and wearing a scarf to cover one's hair. The modest approach for Islamic women is to protect their body shapes to be only seen by their spouses and immediate family members (Rangoonwala, Sy and Epinoza, 2011).

### **3.4.1 Changes in Clothing in Saudi Arabia (1932- 2014)**

It is so fortunate that Saudi Arabia was not conquered by Western communities or influenced by external control. As a result, Islamic clothing and especially the Hijab have prevailed due to the Sunni Sharia laws that were created by the Hanbali Madhab (this is one of the major Islamic schools in Sunna) (Zaidi, 2015). In addition, Saudi Arabia has for so long remained under Wahhabi-based paradigms: this is another Islamic school in Sunna that has led to revolutionary changes to Islamic clothing. These changes began in Saudi Arabia after the King Abdulaziz created the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932 (AlMunajjed, 1997). It is notable that Islamic clothing was linked to a very scriptural and traditional paradigm, which is different from the Western culture that is in constant fashion change. For Saudi Arabians, the earlier attempts to change Islamic wear and more so that of females was linked to authentic Islamic moral and cultural practices.

KSA modernization has resulted in change in the dress code for Muslims. This includes selective adoption of Western clothing. This started with the influence by Europeans in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as European soldiers, diplomats, and travellers left a significant mark on the Islamic region (Stillman, 2003). The first changes were noted in using uniforms and traditional sober Western styles. In this case, dresses were full length and were worn with wide coats of different colours to differentiate between the poor and the rich. During the 1990s, there was the Islamic revival movement that featured more Western styles as well as adopting more individualised reformist trends. It is also at

this time that the new dress code was stimulated by consciousness of the wealthy and young consumers. For most Islamic nations, the loose outer garments and all-covering clothes were replaced by the end of the 1990s by form-fitting abayas. There were also significant changes in the leisure dressing code for young men as they replaced thawbs with t-shirts. In addition, children from both genders started to wear t-shirts and blue jeans while men started to wear a special American clothing item, the baseball cap.

There were also fast changes in Islamic dress codes as a result of the reforms done during the King Abdulaziz reign as he introduced less strict dressing codes. Some major changes started with abandonment of Islamic traditional dress worn under the abaya, which was replaced by European style dresses (Stillman, 2003). Since Islamic law demands modesty in public dressing, the newly adopted styles were worn under full body wraps and shrouded veils. In the 1970s, most Muslim women left the constricting black abaya and adopted tailored body wraps which had non-traditional colours from European dyes (Stillman, 2013). In addition, women started wearing colourful headscarves, which were different from the traditional garments that were all-black. As shown in Figure 3-6, young women also started to wear makeup, nail polish, tight coats and open-toed shoes.



Figure 3-6: Fashionable and colourful Abaya

(Source: Namshi, 2016)

In the Middle East, the fashion industry now adopts the attractive features found in the international market. Nevertheless, some Middle Eastern fashions and especially those of Saudi Arabia are still linked to the Islamic identity and the traditional veil (Long, 2005). This can be attributed to the strong bond with the customer in that garments adhere to Islamic rules that create the country's identity as explained in the national identity theory. From the traditional veil-fashion, dramatic changes and expansion of Middle Eastern fashion have occurred and sophisticated, bright coloured, feminine and glamorous garments are now available and produced by the new generation of designers in Saudi Arabia and other Arabian Gulf countries.

Bianchi (2011) noticed that the fashion in the Middle East is influenced by wealthier populations, changing social values and a strong economy, thus encouraging fashion designers to be bolder and incorporate European fashion tastes in their designs and satisfying the demands of their middle and high-end clientele. The fashion designers in the Middle East are influenced by two major fashion cultures. The first culture is for clients who understand the trends and thus are looking for modernity and good taste. The second group is of customers looking for a more conservative trend (Jaques, 2010). This way, most Middle Eastern fashion designers are forced to modify traditional veil-fashion trends to more modern looks so as to satisfy both types of customers.

It is arguable that the Hijab is the major attire for traditional Islamic women. Nonetheless, more interest is currently on the abaya that is worn in Arabian Gulf countries and consisting of a cloak that is worn over other clothing when in public. The abaya was made traditionally from black fabric but sometimes with coloured embroidery or sequins as decoration. It can be worn differently, either by covering the head to the toes or from shoulders to toes. Usually, it is combined with a headscarf and face veil. It has modern styles offering diversity and varying in shapes, colour cuts and styles. In addition, it is made from different fabrics such as crepe, chiffon, georgette and cotton (al-Qasimi, 2010). A current design popular in Jeddah, in KSA is from satin or silk to make it stylish and unique as well more aligned to modern fashionable trends (Dames, 2001).



It is also notable that many modern abayas have decorated/ embroidered edges with colourful motifs in the back and front (Al-Qasimi, 2010). In addition, expensive styles have high-end motifs such as lace embellishments, glittering diamantés, ribbons, stones and colourful fabrics that are imported in various styles to add elegance (Al-Qasimi, 2010). The recent abaya styles available have changed from a traditional draped design to include shapes following the figure of the wearer or a popular modern abaya is caftan shaped. This is based on the traditional Egyptian Milaya leaf design (Al-Qasimi, 2010). There are other shapes including a fish silhouette and large butterfly figure that are commonly found on many Arab women. The attire can also be made chic by designers adding net sleeves with satin to get an elegant look, as shown in Figure 3-7 (Dames, 2001).



Figure 3-7: Different shapes and colours of Abayas.

(Source: lahlooba, 2013)

Lastly, the abaya has transcended the Arabian market and is now in the larger global market. The current abaya is easy to modify, is comfortable to wear, and is made from lightweight fabric (Al-Qasimi, 2010). This way, the abaya has not gained acceptance in Muslim societies only but also in the international fashion market since it is easily adapted to preferences and tastes of Islamic women. A good example is the ‘Kum Seeni’, an abaya style with a Chinese inspired sleeve (Al-Qasimi, 2010). This type of abaya is very popular because it can easily be adapted to the wearer’s needs and occasion (Dames, 2001).

Abaya for parties are often brightly coloured with beadwork and heavy embroidery while those for work environments are simple and with an elegant cut (Al-Qasimi, 2010).

### **3.5 Women in Saudi Arabia**

According to a recent report (World Report, 2013), women in Saudi Arabia have been facing gender discrimination in a number of different ways, primarily related to issues of culture, rather than religion. The religion of Islam gave women full rights. However, they have been previously viewed in KSA as simply housewives and mothers, facing controlled access to the public realm, being forbidden to study certain subjects, to drive or undertake official work, while also requiring permission for some medical interventions. It is therefore clear that women have been excluded from many fields of education and employment. However, the traditions and culture responsible for this prejudice against women (UN Report, 2012) arises from many factors, including the *Als-Sahwa Al-Islamiyya* “Islamic Awakening”, or Age of Awakening, an Islamic movement started in Saudi Arabia due to politicization of Islam in Saudi Arabia (Lacroix, 2014). This movement started in the 1970s (Lawson, 2011). This refers to the revival of the religion of Islam which was in the 1980s.

However, many rules have, over recent years, been transformed, particularly following the setting up of Saudi Arabia Vision 2030. These new rules and regulations can lead to increased levels of change. For example, the authority of the religious police has been codified and the community has been given the opportunity to innovate and develop. This has awarded young people, and particularly young women, to achieve their goals and to be creative in several areas, i.e. education and sports.

#### **3.5.1 Education**

Saudi women were unable to pursue their education until 1976, and even after this, they followed a separate curriculum to their male peers, being primarily educated in preparation for being good wives. This gender discrimination was practiced for nearly twenty years, but began to change when a group of educated middle-class men pointed out to the government the importance of educating woman. The first woman’s school

was opened 1960 (Alsuwaida, 2016), followed by the establishment of the General Directorate of Girls' Education by the Saudi government (Rugh, Jun 2002).

Since the accession of King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, several laws have been passed for the development and facilitation of individual life in KSA. King Abdullah differed from his processor, with his focus being on reforming the country in four primary areas directly related to the human rights of Saudi citizens: (1) women's rights; (2) freedom of expression; (3) judicial equity; and (4) religious tolerance. Today, Saudis are considerably freer than they were several years ago, with King Abdullah continuing to promote a more flexible and practical mind-set among his citizens (Alsuwaida, 2016), including the launch of the King Abdullah Sponsorship Programme (KASP) in 2005, which has enabled Saudis to travel and study abroad to undertake higher education, regardless of gender and experience. (Alsuwaida, 2016).

### 3.5.2 Sport

Saudi women first entered the realm of public sports in 2012, when KSA agreed to allow women to compete in the London Olympics as part of the national athletics team. However, at the same time women were still not permitted to enter sports stadiums. On 29th October 2017, the General Sports Authority in KSA announced that, by early 2018, families, including females would be (subject to specific controls) able to enter three major sports playgrounds in three major cities, i.e. Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam (Agence France-Presse, 2017).

### 3.5.3 Transportation

Up until recently, Saudi Arabian women were not allowed to drive any kind of vehicle. However in 2013 it was announced that women can ride motorbikes and bicycles but only in restricted areas such as parks and recreational areas with some restrictions in terms of dress code (Ramdani, 2013). On September 26, 2017, provisions were adopted for the implementation of traffic regulations, including the issuing of driver's licenses - male and female in Saudi Arabia, from June 2018 Saudi woman were allowed to drive cars. They will not need permission from their male guardian to issue a driver's license

and won't need their guardian in the car when they drive (Chulov and Al-Faour, 2017). This gave Saudi women their freedom and independence. In addition, being able to drive gave Saudi women opportunity to fill several jobs that were previously limited to men.

#### **3.5.4 Authority Position**

In the past Saudi women did not have the opportunity to be appointed into higher position jobs. However, in February 2013, King Abdullah appointed the first 30 women to the Shura, Saudi Arabia's consultative council. This was a first step for the women to be appointed in such these positions, soon they will be allowed to actually run for office.

Also, on September 2017, big steps have been made in the history of Saudi Arabia. It was announced to nominate the first spokeswoman at the Saudi Arabian embassy in the United States of America (Saudi Gazette report, 2017). This has been followed by announcement of the Saudi royal order to appoint the first female ambassador in the history of Saudi Arabia. Princess Rima bint Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz Al Saud was appointed as an ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the United States of America on February 2019 by the official Saudi press agency (SPA, 2019).

### **3.6 The Economy of Saudi Arabia**

Oil forms the main source of the country's income, being is the largest exporter in the Arab world and the second largest globally (Namrata, 2017). KSA possesses 18% of the Earth's proven oil reserves (OPEC, 2018) , and thus ranks as a major oil exporter, having played a principal role in OPEC for a number of years. According to Brady (2011), the oil sector forms the main part of Saudi government revenues and export incomes.

In 2017 the Saudi government has revealed the new Saudi Arabia Vision 2030 and its long-term goals. One of the vision pillars is to encouraged private sector growth for many years to reduce the dependence on oil and development of the national economy and generate employment for the largest possible number of young people for the growing Saudi population (Saudi Vision 2030, 2017).

### 3.7 Garment Industry in Saudi Arabia

The national English language newspaper of the region, the Saudi Gazette (2012), has estimated that KSA annually imports about SR10 billion (approximately £2 billion) worth of clothing. Saudi revenue in the apparel retail segment in 2018 amounted to £799m and it is expected that the revenue of the Saudi volume market will reach £1,281m by 2022 (Statista, 2018).

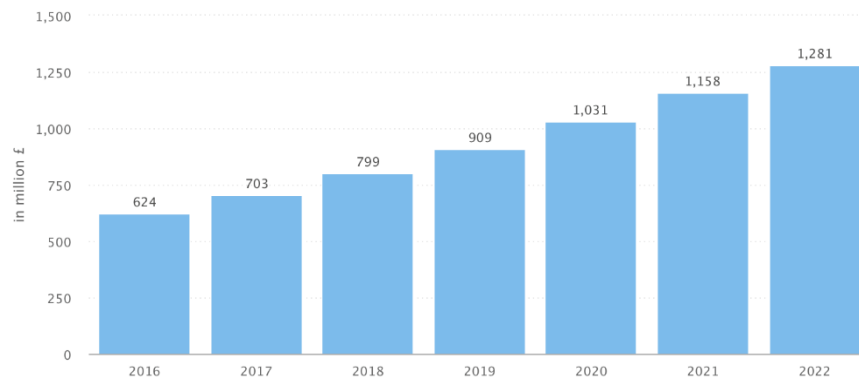


Figure 3-8: Saudi revenue in the apparel segment in 2018

(Source: Statista, 2018)

The majority of purchases tend to take place during the months of Sha'aban and Ramadan, in preparation for Eid Al-Fitr, as Saudis usually celebrate the end of the Ramadan month by buying new clothes for their families. This opportunity has led to many initiatives to bring more Saudi nationals into textile manufacturing (Zakzouk, 2012). The Chairman of the Textiles Committee at the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) estimated that Saudi families spent SR6 billion, approximately £1.2 billion, on clothes and ready-made wedding dresses (Zakzouk, 2012).

The Council of Saudi Chambers has therefore expressed interest in the fashion design sector, with a committee having been established to support Saudi women in projects throughout the Kingdom. The committee, which is designed for female fashion designers who carry a brand, aims to initiate the manufacture of national apparel and clothing for women, men and children, in accordance with traditional norms and religious norms.

Low levels of local investment in the fashion sector offers productive families greater opportunities to enter the market professionally through the 'Kisaa' programme (Saudi Gazette, 2012). This programme offers coupons for families with specific conditions to buy clothes from productive families. Almost 80% of these families focus on clothes, fashion, and design, and can play an active role in the Saudi economy by transferring their knowledge of international technology and expertise to KSA. This programme has been organised by the Saudi Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Chairman of the Textiles Committee at the JCCI confirmed that the Kisaa project will contribute to helping owners of existing facilities in fashion and dressmaking to gradually replace immigrant workers with skilled Saudi tailors, both male and female (Zakzouk, 2013). Women's clothing accounts for 45% of the market, and, due to women being required to wear the Abaya in public, there has also been an increase in the market for designed and styled Abayas (Zakzouk, 2013). Moreover, these projects will attract experts and consultants from the foremost countries in the global garment manufacturing business (Al-Hassan, 2013). According to the chairman of the national committees emanating from the Council of Saudi Chambers, the project plans focuses on establishing concepts with the potential to be developed and supported for export, in order to take advantage of the competitive national and international markets.

There are currently few garment factories in KSA (Alhejazi and Kadasah, 2016). These tend to produce garments intended for local markets, as well as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Arab countries (Alhejazi and Kadasah, 2016). Items include: (1) uniforms for government and private schools; (2) work uniforms; (3) hospital uniforms; and (4) uniforms for other private and government sectors. Currently, items of clothing designed by Saudi designers are imported into KSA, due to such designers lacking the opportunity to use their talents in their own country. This leads them to move to countries such as Turkey to create their designs, which are then exported to Saudi markets (Al-Hassan, 2013).

In 2016 Saudi Arabia has established "Monsha'at", the General Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME), to organize, support, develop and sponsor the SME

sector to increase the productivity of these enterprises and increase their contribution to the Saudi GDP from 20% to 35% by 2030 (Monshaat, 2016).

SME create new jobs opportunities, reduce unemployment, raises the proportion of non-oil exports, promotes regional and rural development and helps to create an innovative society. Based on the statistic results of the Saudi Arabian general authority of statistics, in 2017 there are 977,535 small and medium establishments in Saudi Arabia (32937 establishments are focus on the manufacture of Clothes) (Industrial Survey Report, 2017). These establishment has been increasing in number through years although it has a drop in the number in the period 2000-2009 but after 2009 it started to increase again.

Monsha'at has supported a big number of projects in different fields. One of the projects has been supported in Riyadh was the establishing a centre for the rehabilitation and training of Saudi competencies in the beauty and fashion sector. This project provided over 200000 jobs for women. Many of these SME's use the social media to promote their products and services as social media is widely spread in Saudi Arabia.

The fashion industry is considered an important means of developing employment in KSA, including creating opportunities for innovation and the development of female talent.

### **3.7.1 Fashion Marketing in Saudi Arabia**

The emerging fashion markets in Saudi Arabia have attracted the attention of the global fashion designers. According to several recent studies, the consumers in Saudi Arabia have the intention to purchase luxury goods along with other fashion products including jewellery, accessories and clothing. In the recent times, the Saudi market has witnessed an excessive consumption particularly in fashion products. The dresses for women have turned out to be more westernized in Saudi Arabia and at the same time, the consumers belonging to the middle-class group have become increasingly brand conscious. Hence, it can be deduced that Saudi market has become an attractive fashion market for the international brands. Nevertheless, marketing and distributing products

in the Saudi market is not a paved road for the reason that consumers in this region becoming extremely demanding (Luqmani., 1989). In addition, the culture and religion play a noteworthy role in shaping the behaviour aspects of the purchasers. Therefore, the international fashion brands intending to expand their business boundaries in this region need to act with great sensitivity as well as comprehend the Saudi culture.

The findings of the research carried out by Lopez and Fan (2009) revealed that the needs and preferences of the Saudi consumers are quite dissimilar from those of the western consumers. Accordingly, the authors noted that there is no specific method for the successful promotion of the fashion products and services. The global fashion brands need to adapt to the Islamic cultural context. They need to create promotional messages in harmony with the culture in the country. Furthermore, it is essential for the fashion brands and designers to adequately manage the entire marketing mix components. Along these lines, they can adopt a standardization approach in order to promote their brands. The international fashion brands ought to emphasize on the differences and convergence in the behaviour of the Saudi consumers.

Wilson (2012) noted that the global fashion brands can effortlessly target the Saudi consumers with similar brand personality. To this end, if the international fashion brands intend to accomplish same brand perceptions in the region, they are required to devise brand positioning strategies that focus in the characteristics which enable the consumers to perceive the product in the similar manner. Nevertheless, the extent to which the global marketing programs should be standardized or adapted has been the centre of debate.

In the viewpoint of Easey (2009), fashion products have an interaction effect with social life. Hence, the marketers ought to focus on the disparities and variations in the behaviour of the consumers. They must also take into consideration the extent to which they will adapt their brand personality in order to fulfil the unique cultures.



### 3.7.2 Fashion Distribution in Saudi Arabia

There are several distribution options available for the international brands intending to sell their products in the Saudi market. The online fashion market is anticipated to rise at an average rate of 20 percent by the year 2021. Therefore, the e-commerce can be profitable platform for the international fashion brands to distribute their products in the region. According to the statistics, the Saudi consumers spends approximately 618 \$US for online purchases and this value is likely to escalate in the succeeding year. Hence, fashion brands such as Zara, H&M, Burberry and Body Shop can utilize e-commerce platforms in order to distribute their products (Chu et al., 2019). The foreign brands can also utilize the direct selling distribution method in order to distribute their products.

### 3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has established that KSA is viewed as the original homeland of the Arab people and also of Islam. It highlighted that the Kingdom is considered the most conservative of the Islamic countries, with its traditions and culture having a considerable influence on daily life.

The garments in Saudi Arabia are strongly bounded with the Islamic rules. Worn garments are characterised as a modern garment. Although it has changed somewhat but still retains some elements that characterise it with modesty which are in line with the teachings of the Islamic religion.

The Saudi Arabian economy used to be based on oil but with the new vision, it is trying to reduce dependence on it and depend on other sources. Another pillar of the vision is to give the opportunity to all society members. Therefore, the women's role has changed from a housewife to an authority position after giving her the opportunity for education. Saudi women have gained independence in travelling by driving which offer greater opportunities for independence. This created new employment opportunities for women and being financially independent without relying on others. Also, engaging in sports field proves that Saudi women are capable to enter any field to share men's achievements. This was not able for Saudi women to do in the past.

This chapter has established the presence of a large garment industry in KSA, with the population increasing its spending on clothing, particularly in association with religious occasions. The government is therefore now helping to grow this sector by supporting fashion designers and assisting new designers to start their own businesses.



# Research Methodology

## Chapter 4      Research Methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide an overall explanation of the methodological matters regarding this research. Research methodology is concerned with the way(s) by which the researcher collects and analyses data in order to answer the research questions.

### 4.2 Research Methodological Choice

The research uses a range of approaches to collect data including quantitate, qualitative & mixed methods.

#### 4.2.1 Quantitative Research Design

Quantitative research is objective in nature, measurements of tangible, countable, sensate features of the world (Naoum, 2013). An example of a quantitative research technique is a survey questionnaire. According to Creswell (2003), questionnaires transfer the data into numbers and the researcher then generalises the sample results on to the population. A survey strategy tends to answer who, what, where, how much and how many questions. It is linked with the deductive approach, with a large amount of data and is based on the closed question (Naoum, 2013).

#### 4.2.2 Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research is subjective and focuses on feeling, meanings, experiences and description (Lune, 2016). It investigates the "cause and the way" and relies on open questions (Jonker, 2009). A qualitative research can be done in several ways, for example, interview, observation and case study. Qualitative research is typically applied to a small sample size due to time and cost issues (Saunders et al., 2016).

#### 4.2.3 Mixed Methods

The mixed method is created in response to the limitation of the quantitative and qualitative methods, it is a mixture that contains concepts of qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to reach a depth of understanding within the research (Creswell et al., 2011). Combination of quantitative and qualitative data in the same research

decreases the limitation of each method and can collect more data in different ways such as using a mix of interviews, questionnaires, observation and focus group (Creswell et al., 2011).

In this research a mixed methods choice was used to reduce the limitations of the study. Quantitative tools such as questionnaires have been used to gain information from consumers through social media such as Facebook and Twitter for the Jeddah community.

Jeddah has been chosen in this study due to the demographic nature of the region. Jeddah city is considered the most liberal city in Saudi Arabia. This is because most of its population are from different regions of the world and had settled in the city for decades. In addition, most questionnaire responses were from Jeddah: this suggests that the society of Jeddah accepts new ideas more than other regions in Saudi Arabia. In addition, Jeddah is the homeland of the researcher. This helped to ease to collect participants to evaluate the digital visualisation.

Qualitative tools helped to fulfil the data collection and get information as much as it can be collected. This was through the interviews and focus groups where discussion with participants can be happen.

Qualitative tools were also used, to deepen the understanding of motivations behind behaviour patterns and the cultural requirements for acceptability of digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. This has been undertaken through interviews and focus groups where a discussion with participants can be done. Therefore, this study has adopted qualitative techniques to collect data through semi-structured interviews with cultural leaders and the fashion designers in Saudi Arabia. Nvivo software was used to create themes for the analysed data: an example of a Nvivo screen shot can be found in Appendix L.

### **4.3 Research Strategy**

There are a number of research strategies in social science research. Saunders et al. (2016) argued that strategies commonly used in research are experiments; archival

research; survey; case study; ethnography; grounded theory and action research. However, each of these strategies has both advantages and disadvantages.

However, selection of any of these strategies is based on the level and extent of control the researcher possesses over the study, the degree of focus on contemporary events and finally the type of research questions (Yin, 2014). Table 4-1 shows these three conditions and different strategies used plus the form of research questions, which influences the decision to use them.

Table 4-1: Characteristics of different strategies.

(Source: Yin, 2014).

Strategy	Form of Research Question	Requires control of Behavioural Events?	Focus on Contemporary Events
Experiment	How, Why?	Yes	Yes
Survey	Who, What, Where, How many, How much?	No	Yes
Archival analysis	Who, What, Where, How many, How much?	No	Yes/No
Documentation	Who, What, Where, How?	No	Yes/No
History	How, Why?	No	No
Case study	How, Why	No	Yes

These variances indicate that no strategy is perfect, but decisions to use one of these strategies are based on research questions. However, the case study strategy is appropriate if the researcher asks for a rich understanding of the research context (Saunders et al., 2016). Furthermore, Yin (2014) mentioned that the benefit of the case study strategy is to use multiple sources of techniques such as a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. In addition, an important application of the case study methodology is when a researcher wants to explore the situation being

evaluated. Therefore, the case study strategy is considered to be the most suitable strategy approach for this research.

#### 4.3.1 Types of Case Study

The main distinction when implementing a case study strategy is between the single case and multiple cases (Yin, 2014). A case study can be conducted in a single case (one organisation) or in multiple case studies (more than one organisation). However, whether multiple or single, the case studies can be holistic or embedded case studies, depending on the defined unit of analysis (Yin, 2014). In this regard, Voss et al. (2002) thought that the fewer the case studies, the greater the opportunity for in-depth of observation. Figure 4-1 illustrates the types of case study designs.

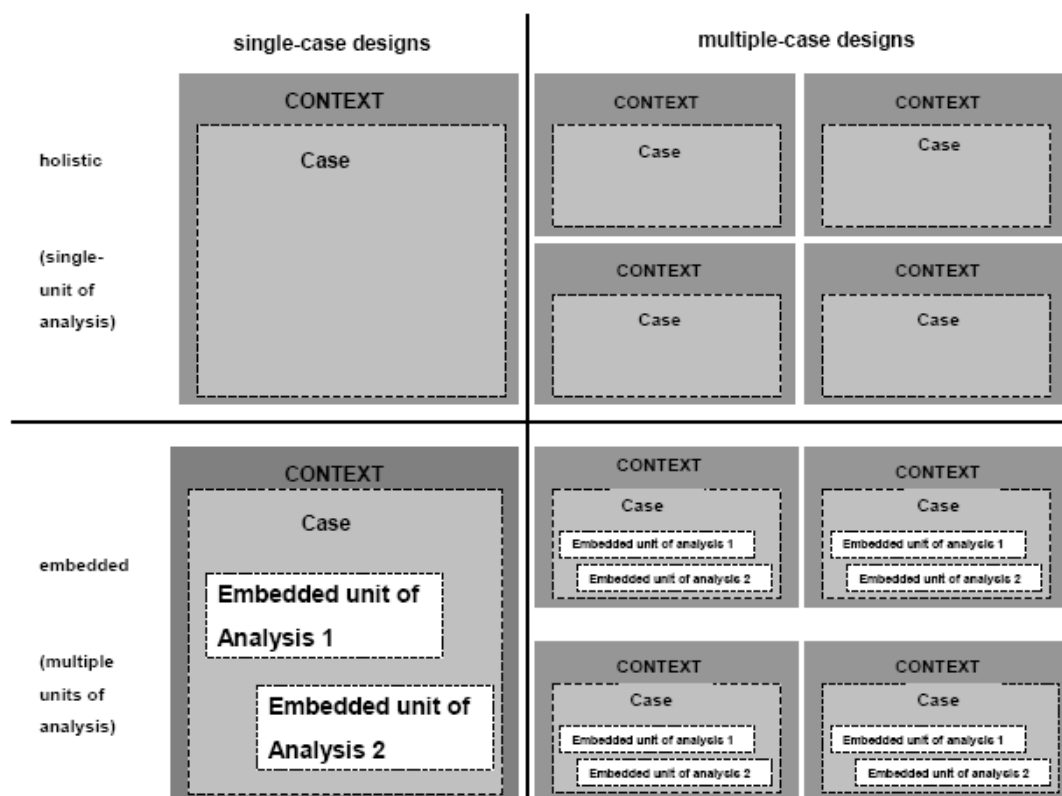


Figure 4-1: Case study designs.

(Source: Yin, 2014).

Yin (2014) stated that the single case study is a proper design in these five grounds. First, when the critical situation is represented in a well-designed theory test. The theory

defined a clear set of propositions as well as the circumstances in which the propositions are believed to be true. To confirm or expand the theory, one condition may satisfy all conditions for testing the theory.

Second, is when the case represents an extreme situation or a rare or unique case. The third logic is called representative or typical case. The fourth rationale is when the situation is a state of inspiration. Finally, the fifth rationale case is the longitudinal purpose, when studying the same single case at different points in time.

Jeddah city represents a modern liberal example of Saudi Arabian cities, which is a more extreme situation in relation to Saudi Arabia. However, Jeddah is also the centre of the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia and consequently, the exploratory single case study approach was totally appropriate. Yin (2014) adds that the great benefit of an exploratory case study approach is that by focusing on a single case, the case can be intensively examined.

Based on the above discussion, the researcher adopted the design of a single holistic case study design, where the context was the city of Jeddah as is the case. The design of a holistic single case study was selected because this study requires a holistic vision, including one bounded case, that qualifies as an exploratory approach and required to understand the practicality of using digital technology to enable the staging of Saudi Arabian fashion show.

#### 4.3.2 Time Horizon

According to Saunders et al., (2009) there are two-time horizons in the research, the cross-sectional and the longitudinal research. The longitudinal includes longer period research, and time-consuming (usually years). This type of research outlines the effect of an observed phenomenon providing a richer description of the reality on the ground (Jueterbock, 2012). Thus, this time horizon has fallen beyond the scope of this thesis.

However, the cross-sectional research investigates a specific phenomenon over a limited time frame. In view of that, this research will analyse the cultural and practical requirements for a digital fashion show during the period of research from 2014 to 2017.



It must be noted that these requirements may change over a longer period and may vary in other cultural contexts and so the cross-sectional time horizon is more appropriate for this study.

#### 4.3.3 Ethical Procedures

This study was ethically approved by the Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Arts, Design and Humanities at De Montfort University in April 2016. The application has been made to for the approval to conduct research through personal interviews, questionnaires, observations and focus groups (Appendix A). Every participant in this study was provided with a consent form before they started either the questionnaire, interviews or the focus group. The consent form describes the purpose of the tool used (questionnaire, interview and focus group) to the participant. Participants also were informed that the data provided will be used for the research purposes only. In addition, it was stated that all interviews and focus groups will be audio recorded, and all data will be safely saved in a secured storage. In the research the respondent identity will be anonymous and will be given codes to differentiate between them. Due to the fact that the main language in Saudi Arabia is Arabic each tool has been provided in both English and Arabic version. It also had been notified that participation in this study is voluntary and they have the right to withdraw.

#### 4.3.4 Data Collection Methods

There are many techniques are used from existing publications relating to the topic of research. These include interviews, focus group; questionnaires; archival records; observations; documentation and literature review (Denscombe, 2007). However, there are two main forms of data; primary and secondary.

**Secondary data:** Is the data collected from existing publications related to the topic of research to create a conceptual framework for this research. The sources of these data were mainly: reference books, articles, research, papers, magazines, and the Internet.

**Primary data:** is original data that was collected specifically for the purpose of this research from sources such as interviews and questionnaires.

In this research, primary and secondary data were both used. However, this research uses semi-structured interviews and questionnaire as the main method to gather in-depth knowledge from the case study. Direct observation and documentation also used to support evidence gathered from other sources to create the framework. This framework was evaluated with focus groups. The methods used in this research are shown in Table 4-2 and displayed in chronological order. Also, it shows the participants of each tool, the method used to apply and the reason for using each tool.

Table 4-2: Research tools used in the research to collect data.

(Source: Sabbahi,2018)

Method	When	Who	How	Why
Preliminary survey (Section 5.2)	May 2014	Consumers	Online questionnaire	Initial questionnaire to define the broad characteristics of the type of digital fashion show preferred.
Interview Phase 1 (Section 5.3)	June-August 2015	Cultural leaders	Face-to-face, semi-structured	To know the opinion of the high authority in the country, whether they will accept the idea or not. Knowing the religious, traditional and regulations of the country will help to get the best conceptual framework for the project.
Observation (Section 5.4)	December 2015 – January 2016	Magazines (printed and online version)	Direct observation	To explore how garments are presented and promoted in Saudi Arabia, in term of physical promotion such as in stores, magazines (printed and online) and social media.
		Apparel market		
Consumer questionnaire 1 (Section 5.5)	July 2016	Consumers	Online questionnaire	Finding acceptable representations of women to show in public as a digital fashion show.
Interview Phase two (Section 5.6)	August – September 2016	Fashion Designers	Face-to-face, semi-structured	To give their opinion of the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia, what obstacles they face when setting up a fashion show and the impact of fashion shows on the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia.

Consumer questionnaire 2 (Section 5.7)	April 2017	Consumer	Online questionnaire	To finalise the acceptable presentation based on a series of options.
Focus group (Chapter 8)	July 2017	Fashion Designers Cultural leaders Consumers	Face-to-face focus groups	Evaluate the digital fashion show and find whether it can be displayed in public in Saudi Arabia or not and what amends are needed to improve it.

#### 4.3.5 The Interviews

For a case study, the researcher must identify the sources of the evidence. Thus, this research used multiple sources of evidence coming from four sources as mentioned in the previous section.

Interviews are one of the most important methods that can support the researcher to collect reliable and valid data. Saunders et al (2016) believe that interviews can be classified into three categories:

- Unstructured interviews:
- Semi-structured interviews;
- Structured interviews;

The unstructured interviews make the interviewer create questions unpredictably during an interview (Sekaran, 2003). In this situation, the interviewer needs to have a clear idea about the aspects that are required to be explored, as there are no determined questions to work through (Saunders et al., 2016). Furthermore, the interviewee in this type of interview feels free to talk about their opinions, and attitudes related to the issue of the research.

In contrast, in the structured interviews, the questions should be prepared by a researcher and written as the 'interview schedule', where the same wording and order of questions are used (Oppenheim, 2005). Moreover, using this sort of interviews could contribute to gaining uniform data, which guarantees the comparability of this data.

Regardless of the potential fluency that structured and unstructured interviews offer as research techniques, the semi-structured interview has many advantages over both methods (Collis and Hussey, 2013). It provides rich and in-depth information. Gives freedom to the interviewer. Many disadvantages can be avoided, for example, questions may be changed for participants because of the experience gained by the interviewer, so the type of data obtained from those initially interviewed may be significantly different from those obtained from these interviews later on (Collis and Hussey, 2013). Also, semi-structured interviews can provide standardized information similar to that provided by structured interviews without losing the freedom and flexibility of unstructured interviews. In general, the semi-structured interview has several advantages and disadvantages, as any other technique.

The semi-structured interview is a good way to explore the subjective meanings of respondents. It provides the researcher with the opportunity to change the questions of participants who may be talking about issues that the interviewer did not think, which can sometimes support the study (Gray, 2014).

In addition, it allows the researcher to discover the ambiguity, participation, or incomplete responses that participants may face. Gray (2014) notes that when a participant presents an unclear or incomplete answer, it is necessary to seek additional information, while a structured interview or a questionnaire does not allow this.

Because of the direct contact between the interviewer and interviewee, a semi-structured interview allows the researcher to explain the purpose of the research, clarify any doubt, and avoid any misunderstandings. In support of this view, Collis and Hussey (2013) reported that the average response rate for a personal interview was about 95%.

#### **4.3.5.1 The Disadvantages of Interviews**

The main disadvantages of the interview are that they can be costly and time-consuming, especially if there are a large number of participants to be interviewed, as well as difficulty of access (Collis and Hussey, 2013). Furthermore, the interviewer may affect the validity and reliability of the questions as his or her temperament may affect interaction with the person interviewed, and thus affect the interview process.

#### 4.3.5.2 The Interview Protocol

According to Saunders et al., (2016) design and the structure of questions, plus the strictness of the pilot testing affect the internal validity of the data. Accordingly, the interviews questions were developed through the following techniques:

- Creation of the first draft of the questions from literature review regarding the acceptable female presentation for the interviews with cultural leaders (phase one). The second set of questions was for fashion designers (phase two) which covered the areas of fashion shows; the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia, obstacles in setting up a fashion show and the impact of fashion shows on the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia;
- Modifying the questions following a pilot study (more details about the pilot study in 4.4);
- Due to differences in languages, Arabic and English, translation is needed. Therefore, a certified translation has been applied and proofed by an expert translator;
- The interviews took place in two stages: in the first stage, interviews were conducted with cultural leaders (Appendix B). This was because Saudi Arabia is a conservative Islamic country, which means that all the decisions made in the country relate to the religious requirements. By interviewing these leaders, the opinion of the high authority in the country about the religious and cultural requirements and application of the regulations will be known, and in turn this will help to develop the best framework of the project. The questions for these participants were designed to explore the religion and cultural traditions influencing the attitude of Saudi cultural leaders about digital fashion shows and female presentation in digital fashion shows.
- In the second stage, interviews were conducted with fashion designers (Appendix C). The questions for these these participants focused on assessing the size of fashion industry in Saudi Arabia and how they consider it should be developed; what are the obstacles that face fashion shows and its impact toward the fashion

industry; and to get an overall image of the accepted and rejected female presentation and the reason of this acceptance and rejection.

- Administering the final revised questions.

The interview times were arranged in advance with the interviewees and the time allocated for each interview varied from one respondent to another: in general, the average time was approximately 30-45 minutes.

All interviews were conducted on-site at their place of work, which allowed the researcher to access appropriate documents.

To minimize the risk of a mistake, all interviews were conducted in the respondents' and researcher's first language, Arabic, which allows the researcher to understand each word and expression during the interview exactly. In addition, the interviewer asked for the approval to record the interview for the research purposes. Some interviews were audio-recorded and in some interviews the researcher took notes during each interview so that critical items were not missed.

The interviews started with general questions such as name, position etc., then described the nature of the research and the importance of the opinion of the cultural leaders in Saudi Arabia toward the research topic. Likewise, the interviewees were very co-operative, friendly and supportive as they gave the researcher satisfactory time for each interview.

Although it is not easy to evaluate the reliability, frankness, and accuracy of the responses of interviewees, the overall feeling was that the participants were friendly, open, helpful and the majority gave the impression that they were deeply interested in the results of the research. This gave the researcher self-assurance and confidence in the accuracy of the interview process and increased the reliability of the research process.

#### 4.3.5.3 The Research Sample

Interviews are techniques of gathering data in which a selection of participants are asked questions in order to discover what they do, think or feel (Collis and Hussey, 2013).

The first stage interview questions will cover the cultural and religious aspects. In this study, the most reliable data will come from people concerned about religious and cultural requirements and application of the regulations, as well as the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia.

The interviewed sample (6) helped to reflect the population of key influencers of cultural and religious behaviour. This sample was chosen because they are legal authorisation who have a deep understanding of the Islamic rules and regulations. This included the cultural leaders in the Saudi Arabia which are:

- University departments: clothing and textile department and Islamic studies department for King Abdulaziz University and Altaif University;
- Muslim World League (MWL), an Islamic organisation which has one of its main objectives to confront and check extremism among the Muslim community;
- Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (ICCIA) in Jeddah: which helps in the improvement of the infrastructure in the countries of the Islamic world and participates in its development and operation projects.
- The Shari'a board of all Baraka group: this is concerned with the division of religious affairs, which must be compatible with Islamic law in all fields of a company. It is specialized in various fields, including clothing industry and media.

See Table 5-1. This sample represents the aspects of religious, cultural and industry authority in the country.

The second stage interviews were with fashion designers. Interviewees selected were professional and young fashion designers who have experience with the Saudi market in terms of the fashion industry. These fashion designers were of both genders, male (1) and female (4), and specialised in different types of clothing such as evening dresses, bridal dresses, abayas and Ramadan long dresses. It was determined to include designers of all of these specialist types of clothing in order to achieve comprehensive information and clear perceptions about different aspects of fashion industry practices.



Some of the designers participated in international fashion shows in United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Egypt, France or the United States of America (4/5). This sample represents the fashion industry in the country.

Patton (2002) explains that qualitative interviews are flexible and there is no need to have a specific number of participants before the research begins. Based on this idea the researcher continued to interview until most of the answers were repeated and it was clear that the information was sufficient to achieve the research aim and objectives. Furthermore, to minimize interviewing problems such as bias and remembrance, the researcher triangulated the information from interviews with that from other sources for instance and documents. This triangulation helps in constructing the framework which is the main outcome of this research.

#### 4.3.6 The Questionnaire

According to Oppenheim (2005), a questionnaire is a good technique for collecting information from individuals. It is often associated with quantitative research. It is described as a written set of questions to which participants record their answers (Sekaran, 2003). It can be administered by several methods such as e-mail attachments, post, face-to-face or by publishing on a website for interactive completion. However, usage of an internet-based questionnaire offers more benefits than the face-to-face surveys.

In comparison with the interview, the questionnaire participants answer the questions anonymously without the influence of the researcher (Gray, 2014). Saunders et al. (2016) mention some advantages of questionnaires as simplicity of administration; cheaper; offers substantial time saving; and can be used for huge populations. However, there are some disadvantages, such as the difficulty of designing questions; low response rates in comparison to interview; and the participants may not have enough expertise to complete the questionnaire (Gray, 2014).

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#### **4.3.6.1 Schedule of Questionnaire Surveys**

A questionnaire survey was conducted within this study as a supplementary technique to semi-structured interviews within the case studies. The questionnaire survey was conducted in three phases:

**Stage 1:** a preliminary questionnaire survey (Appendix D and Appendix E) was undertaken, with 125 responses. This questionnaire was used to investigate the opinion of the community about the most acceptable female presentation in **Error! Reference source not found.** The key question of this questionnaire was: whether the Saudi consumers prefer a floating dress or a silhouette wearing the garment showing the design. The silhouette was chosen as it is easier for a beginner fashion designer to apply it in the digital fashion show, as replacing the body with any other form of character such as animation would require a high level of experience and skills in using specific software which not all fashion designers may have. In terms of the colour of the bodysuit, in this case blue, it was an example to present the idea clearly to the participants. This questionnaire was an initial questionnaire which was presented in a closed question, quantitative way. This was an essential step to draw a road map for the research.

**Stage 2:** a second consumer questionnaire (Appendix F and Appendix G), with 316 responses. This questionnaire aimed to find the acceptable representations of women to show in public as a digital fashion show from the consumer's point of view. This questionnaire was constructed into five parts; personal information, purchasing habits; views of fashion shows; views of digital fashion shows; views regarding the representation of the model. This questionnaire provided a range of questions, qualitative and quantitative.

**Stage 3:** the third questionnaire (Appendix H) had 112 responses. This questionnaire was to refine the presentation based on prior research. This questionnaire was constructed into three parts; Chest and Neck, Arms, Legs. The aim of this questionnaire is to find the final accepted female presentation for the digital fashion show. This questionnaire gives more depth in the analysis and used qualitative and quantitative questions.

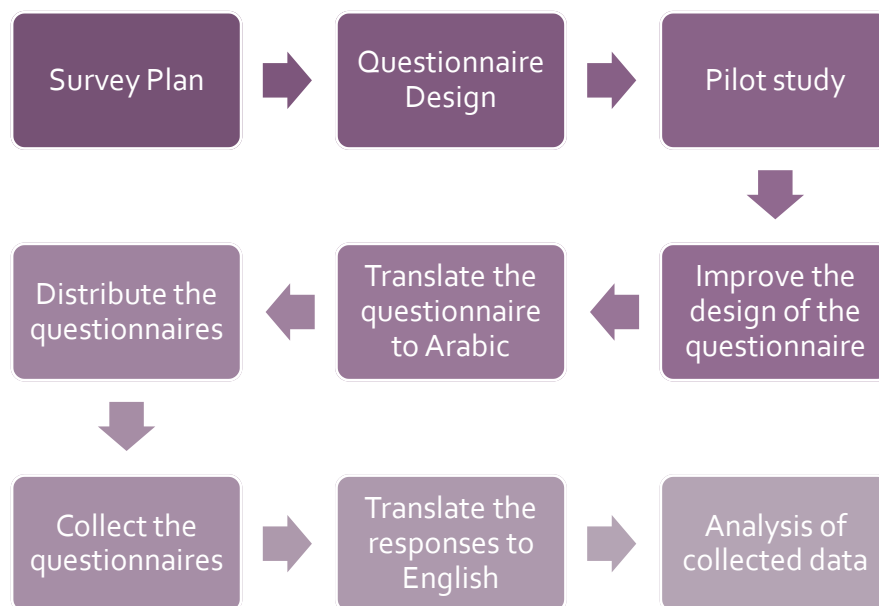


Figure 4-2: Research's questionnaire process.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Once questions had been finalised and translated to Arabic, an online link was sent through social media (What's App, Twitter, email and Facebook). The researcher waited

for a week to collect data and have a sufficient number of responses. It was necessary to have responses from Saudi consumers from both genders.

All questionnaires started with a consent form which described the purpose of the questionnaire itself. After agreeing to participate, the participants were automatically directed to the questionnaire. All questionnaires began with some questions on personal information such as age, nationality, qualifications and specialization. After that, participants started to answer the questionnaire's main questions.

#### 4.3.6.2 Questionnaire Design

The questions on the questionnaires were derived from the review of the literature, which is discussed in section 4.3.6.1. A combination of closed and open questions (as indicated in the previous section) was used to allow free-flowing answers and easy analysis. The closed questions helped coding and comparison and encourage respondents to answer even when topics are complex (Neuman, 2004). Whereas, the open questions allow the fashion show organisers and cultural leaders to give their opinions and include details that might not found in closed questions. The size of the samples was based on the research aim, objective, research question(s), and the research strategy (Gray, 2014).

Originally written in English, each instrument was translated into Arabic to make it suitable for the intended audience. Arabic is completely different from English, in terms of sentence structure, direction of writing, use of words and ways of expressing something. Therefore, there were difficulties and challenges in translating sentences from English, since all questions were constructed from questionnaires and interviews in English to Arabic, while all answers were in Arabic when data was collected and re-translated into English after analysis. Since the literal translation does not give the same meaning in the other language, so the meaning must be translated so as to co-ordinate between the two languages and give the same meaning in both languages. In order to match the meaning, all English texts were translated into Arabic and re-translated into English and reviewed by specialists in both languages. The translation is validated when the meaning is understood and is the same in all Arabic and English texts.

The questionnaires in this study was designed and processed according to the following procedures:

- The questionnaires contained quantitative and qualitative questions (except phase 1 which has only quantitative questions);
- They were written in English and translated to Arabic, the official language of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA);
- The anonymity of responses was guaranteed in advance;
- The respondents were assured that they could withdraw from the research without having to give a reason for that;
- The questionnaires were designed to be not long, to raise the response rate and avoid boredom from the respondent (Wisker, 2007);
- After formulating the questionnaires, a pilot study was made by the researcher to refine the questions, so that the participants could easily answer the questions and the researcher can also easily record the data. The pilot study for the questionnaires was planned and distributed to a number of contacts within the De Montfort University including, the supervisory team, a number of selection researchers who have extensive experiences in survey designs (more details about the pilot study is given in 4.4). The comments obtained from the pilot study were very useful and helpful in improving the overall design of the questionnaire.

#### 4.3.6.3 Questionnaire Sample

The questionnaire targeted the adult Saudi consumers from both genders, aged between 25-50. This age range has been chosen due to their ability to be financially independent through their work as most Saudis go on to university education and by 25 they are in paid work until they reach the age of 50 and start to retire. The age range was limited by a question included in the questionnaire sent to the participants to control the age range. The questionnaire was based on Saudi consumers as the research focusses specifically in this region. The survey was an internet-based, via Twitter and email, because these are the most active online platforms in Saudi Arabia. Questionnaire were

distributed through a range of contacts, making the sampling approach using a snowball method.

#### **4.3.7 Documentation**

Relevant documents used in this research included some reports about symposiums on fashion shows and photos of previous fashion shows conducted in other cities, for example, Riyadh city. These documents were used in this study to provide contextual information in order to achieve a deeper understanding of the practical application of digital technology to enable the staging of the Saudi fashion show. All these documentary sources are reviewed in detail in the case study.

According to many experts in the field of methodology, such as Mason (2004) and Yin (2014), documents are a research method considered by many qualitative researchers as one of the most significant evidence-supported methods. The researcher uses documentary evidence to support the data produced from the interviews. Relevant documents used in this research included some reports about symposiums on fashion shows and photos of previous fashion shows conducted in other cities, for example, Riyadh city. These documents were used in this study to provide contextual information in order to achieve a deeper understanding of the practical application of digital technology to enable the staging of the Saudi fashion show. All these documentary sources are reviewed in detail in the case study.

#### **4.3.8 Direct Observation**

According to Sekaran (2003), direct observation can provide rich information and understanding of the nature of the phenomena observed. It is a method that can benefit the research in terms of the ability to see practices in the different processes interact, such as observing employees' behaviour in dealing with an issue.

A non-participant quantitative observation has been applied in this study. This kind of observation involves observation of the Saudi market in terms of apparel presentation, of the common characteristics in stores in terms of presenting the garments. This type of

observation requires accurate planning; definition of what is to be observed and what questions need to be answered by the observation (Wisker, 2007).

This process consisted of visiting both local and international brand shops in two major shopping malls in Jeddah, the Red Sea mall and the mall of Arabia, to observe how clothes are displayed in these stores and find similarities and differences between displaying clothes in these stores. The two named shopping malls were chosen because they are the two large malls in Jeddah; they have both international and local stores; and they represent typical malls in Saudi Arabia. Stores in these malls, including local and international brands, were analysed in terms of in-store female imagery, window display, mannequins and leaflets and pamphlets distributed in stores. This observation took place between December 2015 and January 2016, as mentioned in Table 4-2. This is because this period usually has end of year sales and the purchase rate is high. During the observation, detailed notes were made at the time for each clothing stores in the selected two malls, since photographs were not allowed for in-store display and window display.

In addition, magazines and social media are considered to be a major way to display garments. Print media were bought from stationary stores (25 magazines in total): Sayidaty, Laha, Layalina, Alam Almodah Jeddah destination, Lamsaty, Seher alsharq, Zahrat alkaleej, Snop catalogue, Lamsat, Azyaa, Burda, Zahra, Alhadeel, Nesf Aldonya, Akhbar Alnojoom, Jamaloki, Laki, Anty, Aljamila, Laki Sayedaty, Dalal, Aljameela, Nisaa, Alhasnaa and Bint Alkhaleej magazines. These magazines represent luxury lifestyle magazines but were chosen because these are the only available printed magazines sold in stores in Saudi Arabia. Female images in the magazines were qualitatively analysed in terms of what parts of the images has been amended, how they had been amended and comparisons made with the online copy of the same magazine.

In terms of fashion designer's social media accounts, 50 fashion designers' accounts on different social media platforms (Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook) have been analysed in terms of how the female models are presented and how the garments are displayed, as presented in Figure 5-13. These images were analysed on a spreadsheet according to these broad characteristics in terms of the presentation of the models such

as whether she shows her face or cover it, or if the designer uses mannequins or real model, or even having a headless model. Also, the type and characteristics of garments displayed were noted.

All data collected from the stores, social media and printed media collection was undertaken between December 2015 and February 2016 in Jeddah city.

#### 4.3.9 Focus Groups

To evaluate the final outcome, a focus group was recommended to find the opinion of the Saudi society toward the digital visualisation of a fashion show. This visualisation is the result of the outcome of the research framework.

A focus group is a small structured group led by a moderator. It is set up to explore a specific topic and the individuals share their views, thoughts and experience toward the topic (Litosseliti, 2003). It can be also interviewing a group of people guided by a moderator to discuss a specific topic (Morgan, 1997).

Focus groups can be categorised into four categories (Krueger, 2014):

- In-person Focus group;
- Telephone Focus group;
- Video-conference Focus group;
- Online Focus group.

For the purposes of this research and to get in-depth data from participants, an in-person focus group has been chosen. This helped to discuss the focus group's questions with the participants, getting deep details through their responses.

Focus groups give a more natural environment than individual interviews: this natural environment obtains multiple views, attitudes and complex negotiations between participants. It is characterized by richness in information and its spontaneity (Litosseliti, 2003).

The disadvantages are the same as the disadvantages of the interviews, which can be summed up as expensive in cost and time-consuming, particularly if there are a large



number of participants, and also, the difficulty of accessibility may arise (Collis and Hussey, 2013).

Furthermore, the interviewer may affect the validity and reliability of the questions as his/her mood could influence the interaction with the focus group and, therefore impact the process.

#### **4.3.9.1 The Focus Group Protocol**

In this research, there were four consumer focus groups and one cultural leader focus group. These were to evaluate the digital fashion show in terms of the acceptability of it for the Saudi Arabian culture. In addition, a professional focus group to evaluate the proposed digital fashion show in terms of how this show enables designers adapt it to create their own individual digital fashion shows and evaluate the digital fashion show guideline package.

These groups were chosen based on the data collected during the research, with the participants of the consumers focus groups to reflect the questionnaire sample mentioned in section 4.3.6.3, which are adult Saudi consumers aged between 25-50, to give their opinion as a Saudi consumer. The cultural leaders focus group participants were key influencers of cultural and religious behaviour (section 4.3.5.3), chosen to give their opinion toward the visualisation from a religious and cultural point of view. The professional focus group participants, fashion designers, were selected as young fashion designers who have experience with the Saudi market in terms of the fashion industry (section 4.3.5.3), to give their opinion as experts in the field.

Two sets of questions were prepared to get the most information from participants in the focus groups: questions for the consumers and cultural leaders and questions for the fashion designers (Appendix I).

Figure 4-3 below describes the Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) used in conducting the consumers' and cultural leaders' focus groups. The fashion designers' focus group had the same procedure. In addition, they had to evaluate the digital fashion show in terms of its usability as a design and the guidelines (Figure 4-4).



Figure 4-3: SOP of the Cultural Leaders and Consumers Focus Groups.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)



Figure 4-4: SOP of the Fashion Designers' Focus Group).

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 4.3.9.2 Focus Group Sample

The typical size of a focus group is between 6 to 10 participants, but the size can range from 4 to 12 (Litosseliti, 2003). Five groups were undertaken: each group consisted of between 4-7 participants, with a total of 24 male and female participants, all over 25 years old. Each group had a similar gender, economic, educational and cultural background. Each focus group lasted between 45-60 minutes and was voice recorded.

#### 4.4 Pilot Study

According to numerous scholars of research methodology (Collis and Hussey, 2013); (Sekaran, 2003); Yin, 2014), the questions of interviews or questionnaires have to be subjected to an initial test which is identified as a Pilot Study. They advocate that the pilot study is very advantageous in clarifying the words, designing the research activity and filtering the questions, so as to achieve validity and reliability of the interview protocol questions. Therefore, a pilot study is very essential to make certain questions in the interviews are clear and make sense to the participants. Furthermore, a pilot study can help to develop more accurate questions related to the research problem that can be used when conducting the formal case study.

For the purpose of this study, a pilot study of the interview was carried out twice and questionnaires questions were piloted three times, one pilot study before each questionnaire and interview. In each pilot study, a draft of the interview questions or questionnaire was given to the interviewees. The first piloting for the interview questions was conducted in the UK by interviewing six students from De Montfort University. The second piloting was for questionnaires questions and was conducted with nine educational persons who have knowledge, experience and interest in the field of fashion. Afterwards, the feedback from both pilot studies was used in redrafting the interview and questionnaires questions. It was very helpful, and their comments were acted on. Accordingly, some changes were made such as language adjustments, re-phrasing some questions in order to be clearer and more understandable and rearranging the order of some questions. The piloting was in both English and Arabic for participants have enough knowledge in both languages (Arabic and English).

#### 4.5 Evaluating the Credibility of the Research Findings

Validity and reliability are commonly used as criteria in evaluating the credibility of research findings. Thus, researchers either doing quantitative or qualitative research need to establish the credibility of their findings (Saunders et al., 2016).

Validity relates to the accuracy and reliability of the data, tools and findings of research, while reliability refers to the ability to achieve the same results if the same process and data collection methods are used (Yin, 2013).

According to Collis and Hussey (2013) and Saunders et al. (2016), qualitative research is high in validity and low in reliability, because qualitative research has a flexible structure to permit changes, On the other hand, Lincoln and Guba (1985) discussed that since there can be no validity without reliability, thus validity is sufficient to establish the reliability.

In order to increase the validity and reliability, the researcher carried out the following steps:

- Adopted a clear methodology that gives high internal reliability; and justified all the methods, techniques and strategies that were implemented;
- In collecting the data, consideration was given to the most appropriate strategy, thus the case study research procedures and techniques were properly documented.
- A mixed methods choice was used to collect rich data through semi-structured interviews, survey questionnaire, direct observation and document review, in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the research;
- The interview and questionnaire questions have been carefully organised and modified after the pilot studies that were conducted before the real study to gain valid questionnaire and interview questions;
- The researcher gave confidence to the interviewees before starting the interviews by explaining the purpose of the study and confirming that their personal information would be confidential by using the consent form and participant information sheet to enhance the validity and reliability;

This study mainly adopted a qualitative method in terms of using semi-structured interviews, direct observation and document review and obtains a rich data so: as a result, the validity is high. However, the quantitative method was also used through the survey questionnaire because these questions are easier for participants to complete which leads to a high completion rate. These responses allowed the research to convert

it into percentage response levels, which leads to high reliability of approach, clarity and repeatability to achieve the same findings.

#### 4.6 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis of a research is an important stage as it helps the researcher to examine the collected data and to prepare conclusions based on the analysis. However, there are two parts of the analysis of data namely: analysis of quantitative data and qualitative data.

Saunders et al. (2016) discuss that there is no standard way to analyse qualitative data. Analysing of qualitative data can be categorized into quantitative methods such as content analysis and non-quantitative methods such as thematic analysis (Collis and Hussy, 2013). Thematic analysis is a process in which pattern and similarities are searched in qualitative textual data in a systematic way to give a clear description of the phenomena (Smith and Firth, 2011)

This study used thematic analysis, which can be used with any methodology of non-quantifying methods, and followed the steps outlined below (Collis and Hussey, 2013):

- Convert the oral interview (if any) to a written record;
- Ensure that the data collected is well-referenced;
- Read and reread the data many times in order to become familiar with it;
- Code the data immediately to allow effective storage and retrieval;
- Group the codes into smaller groups according to themes that arise;
- Write summaries of the findings at every stage.

However, the NVivo software was also used in this study according to the following:

- Import the data to the source document folders in NVivo;
- Collect the data for each theme and each question;
- Give the main data codes related to each question in the free nodes file.

The quantitative data in this research was analysed using Microsoft Excel software.

#### 4.7 Time Management of the Case Study

The researcher started the actual data collection from May 2014 to April 2017 in Jeddah according to the following sequence in Table 4-2:

- A preliminary survey questionnaire was conducted in May 2014 and was distributed through the social media to explore the view of the public about what are the most suitable images for female presentation;
- Face to face semi-structured interviews were conducted with the cultural leaders between June to August 2015;
- A direct observation was undertaken between December 2015 and January 2016;
- A questionnaire was distributed in July 2016 to Saudi consumers.
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted with fashion designers between August to September 2016;
- The final questionnaire was distributed in April 2017 with Saudi consumers in order to finalise the digital fashion show.
- However, the documentation review continued during all the field study and data collection period.

#### 4.8 Challenges and Risks Analysis

By examining primary and secondary sources of data for this research, the researcher had to overcome a variety of challenges. Each challenge was resolved to facilitate data collection to ensure the completion of the research.

The researcher understood the risks involved in asking sensitive questions within the context of a conservative society, especially as the study included some religious and cultural enquiries. It was difficult to establish the appropriate female presentation due to religious and cultural restrictions. In addition, the researcher found it challenging to access a clear written regulation in terms of female representation in advertisements. Moreover, literature related to Saudi Arabia was limited in both Arabic and English, which proved difficult for the researcher.

#### 4.8.1 Limited Quality of Literature from the Topical Perspective

During collection of secondary source literature, the researcher found it difficult to locate academic articles about Saudi Arabia that linked to the research topic. As the fashion industry is in the process of development in Saudi Arabia, there is a lack of academic sources. Therefore, the researcher relied on online articles to describe the situation in the Saudi Arabian fashion industry. During the research, the researcher learned that many official government departments in Saudi Arabia post recent news, announcements and updates on social media platforms such as Twitter, preferring them to more formal academic routes.

#### 4.8.2 Language and Translation

Due to the fact that the language of this study is English and the main language in Saudi Arabia is Arabic, much of the secondary data had to be translated from Arabic into English by the researcher. Additionally, the instruments for collecting the primary data (e.g. questionnaire, interviews and focus group questions) were initially formulated in English and later translated into Arabic, before being translated back to English to ensure accuracy.

After collecting primary data via questionnaires, interviews and focus groups, the researcher needed to translate the participants' responses from Arabic into English. This meant that the responses were not well phrased as Arabic and English are very distinct in terms of the usage of words, grammar and letters and so sometimes it proved difficult to express or describe an idea once translated. Thus, the translation was prepared by a certified translator, to maximise accuracy when reporting the responses.

#### 4.8.3 Sensitivity

As a conservative country, the researcher encountered various sensitivities when collecting the data. This research tried to explore the limits of these sensitive topics to generate new knowledge. This included the engagement of stakeholders from multiple perspectives. The necessary information was gathered from stakeholders to create a visualisation that would be acceptable both in religious and cultural contexts.



#### 4.8.4 Social Norms and Expectations as Opposed to Written Rules

One of the most challenging issues influencing this research was finding clear written rules about what is and is not acceptable in the context of fashion shows. The Islamic religion influences the social norms of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the majority of written rules mention that activities should not violate religion, customs and traditions: however, this statement is vague in terms of what activity might be considered to violate religious boundaries. However, the people in Saudi Arabia unconsciously interpret these rules through experience of what is customary. The promotion regulations list is considered as a confidential document and so was not available to this researcher.

Fashion shows are held as part of seasonal markets, without an official set up. Although these fashion shows are intended for female only audiences, there is still a risk that they could be shut down in light of the lack of clear written regulations. In addition, receiving a permit to hold such an event is difficult. Also, it is noticed that there are some deliberately 'underground' fashion shows, which can be attended by invitation only. There are typically no official images issued as publicity for any fashion show events. All information relating to fashion shows in Saudi Arabia is communicated by word of mouth. This means that there was very little documentation available.

#### 4.8.5 Female Presentation

The way females present themselves in public in Saudi Arabia is a sensitive matter. Religious and cultural conventions must be observed by women. It is essential that a female appear modest when leaving her house. According to the laws of Islam and Saudi Arabia, women should wear the abaya. However, under certain conditions, it is acceptable for a female doctor (for example) to be without an abaya in the workplace. This shows there are some exceptions to the current rules. Therefore, the researcher saw it as important to interview cultural leaders to establish what is acceptable female presentation in public, thereby exploring the boundaries of acceptability without creating an offence when dressing a model for a fashion show.

#### 4.9 Chapter Summary

To achieve the aim and objectives of this study, the researcher selected particular research philosophies, approaches, strategies and data collection techniques.

Also, this chapter justifies the choice of both qualitative and quantitative data in order to gain an in-depth understanding.


The decision to use semi-structured interviews was taken so as to be able to gather as much information as possible from the participants. This was achieved by asking additional questions based on the dialogue with the interviewee. The interviews had been applied to two categories, cultural leaders and fashion designers. The cultural leaders interviews were in order to know the opinion of the high authorities in the country on whether they will accept the idea of a digital fashion show or not. Knowing the religious, traditional and regulations of the country will help to get the best conceptual framework for the project. Fashion designers were interviewed to give their opinion of the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia, what obstacles they face when setting up a fashion show and the impact of fashion shows on the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, Saudi consumers were consulted via a series of three questionnaires, to understand their preferences in relation to digital fashion shows. In terms of the survey questionnaires, it was important to reflect opinions within Saudi society. To achieve a high rate of responses, an internet-based questionnaire was viewed as a convenient choice.

Corresponding to the nature of the study, a non-participant observation approach was also applied. This involved recording characteristics of the presentation of the Saudi apparel market in retail display, lifestyle printed magazines and fashion designers' social media. This took place on different platforms, including in physical stores, magazines and on social media.

A process for evaluating the credibility of the research findings was also specified. Focus groups were used to evaluate the results from the data collected, as well as regarding the digital fashion show. There were in-person focus groups, in which the proposed digital fashion show was discussed. All the tools employed in this research were

pilot tested before use. A pilot study was made for each tool to ensure the clarity of the questions, and to identify more pertinent questions to answer the research questions.

This chapter has afforded a thorough explanation of how the case study was conducted, thereby evaluating the credibility of the research findings. Finally, clear information was delivered regarding how the data was collected and analysed. The following chapter presents the results of the qualitative and quantitative findings.

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# Analysis and Discussion of Qualitative and Quantitative Data

Chapter 5     Analysis and Discussion of Qualitative and Quantitative Data

5.1    Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to analyse the responses and present the findings obtained from the qualitative and quantitative data presented in **Table 4-2** chronologically. The qualitative data was collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews, together with observations. As discussed in the methodology section presented in **Chapter 1**, the results were based on the responses of 11 interviewees in total, including representatives of the cultural leaders and fashion designers in Saudi Arabia.

The interviews sought to explore the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia, together with the means of its promotion, and were conducted in two phases, firstly with members of the cultural leaders in Saudi Arabia and secondly with fashion designers and fashion show organisers in the country. The interviews were designed to obtain the greatest amount of information from the interviewees, as well as an overall picture and clear understanding of attitudes to the representation of females and the difficulties inherent in live fashion shows in Saudi Arabia.

The quantitative data was obtained through a preliminary survey and consumer survey questionnaires. A combination of these approaches in this type of study is preferred (Collis and Hussey, 2013). The evaluation of the quantitative data involved three phases, the first of which concerned the analysis of the preliminary questionnaire responses in terms of the extent to which Saudi society accepts the concept of digital models for audiences of both sexes. The second phase concerned the analysis of the consumer survey regarding acceptable forms of female representation in digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, specifically in terms of those compatible with religion, customs, and traditions. The third phase was concerned with determining the final form of female representation in a digital fashion show. These sources of data collection were used to achieve the aims of the research.

## 5.2 Results of the Preliminary Survey

The Islamic religion does not allow women to display their bodies in front of men: therefore, the preliminary study sought to explore whether Saudi consumers would prefer a floating dress, or one presented on a silhouette in the digital fashion show, as discussed in the methodology chapter. This preliminary survey (Appendix D, E) was distributed via social media platforms, including Facebook and Twitter, aimed at Saudi consumers of both genders and 125 responses were recorded.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts: general information, such as age and gender; the region in which the participants live; and the key question of, 'In a digital fashion show, do you prefer to see a floating dress without a model, or a silhouette presenting an item of clothing', according to the images presented below, which were presented as initial guidance for the direction of the research.



Figure 5-1: The floating dress without a model, and a silhouette wearing the garment.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

### 5.2.1 General Information: Gender and Age of Participants

#### 5.2.1.1 Gender

As illustrated in Figure 5-2, the gender distribution of the participants in the survey included 25% males and 71% females, while 4% of the participants did not answer the question related to their gender.

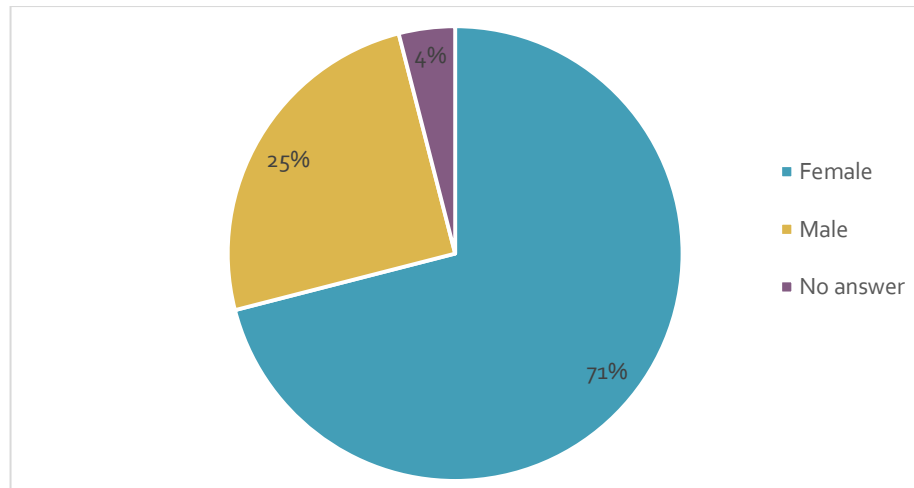


Figure 5-2: Gender of participants (preliminary survey).

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 5.2.1.2 Age

The participants in the survey were divided into five age groups, which produced differing viewpoints in terms of whether the participants preferred a fashion show to employ either a floating dress without a model, or a silhouette wearing the garment.

As illustrated in Figure 5-3, it was found that the majority of the responses were produced by the age range 25 to 35 years (35%).

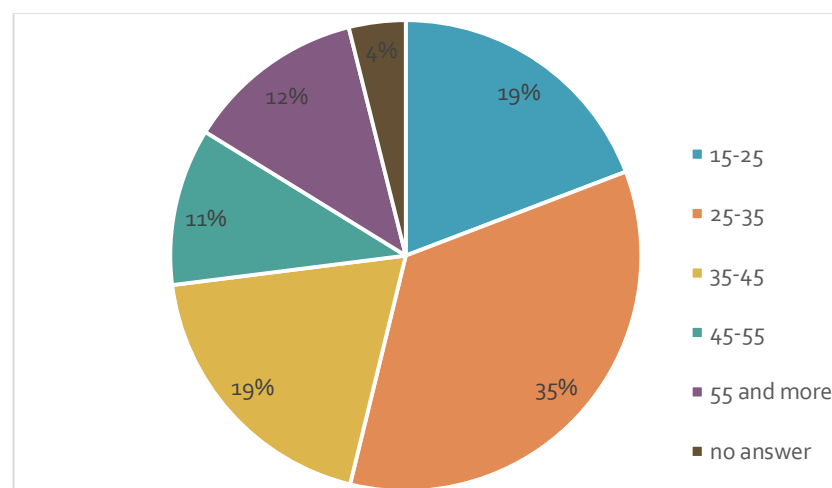


Figure 5-3: Distribution of age (preliminary survey).

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

### 5.2.1.3 Region

Figure 5-4 illustrates the participants' answers according to the region of Saudi Arabia in which they live, illustrating the fact that the majority of the respondents (77%) were from the Makah region of Jeddah, Taif and Makah. This region consists of cities such as Jeddah, whose multi-cultural composition as a result of the large numbers of travellers who have settled in this part of Saudi Arabia means that it is considered to be less conservative and less tribalistic than other regions.

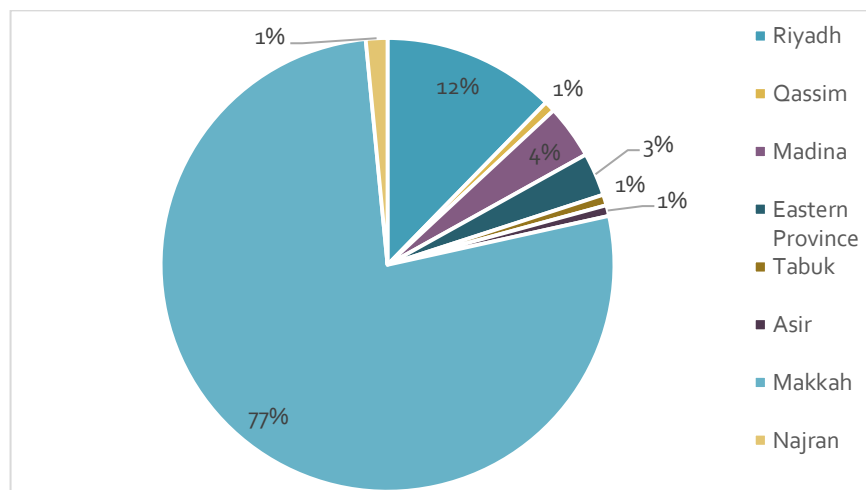


Figure 5-4: Survey responses by Saudi Arabian region (preliminary survey).

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Figure 5-5 shows that the majority of the survey respondents from the Makah region of Jeddah, Taif, and Makah, were from Jeddah (83%). This might be because Jeddah is considered to be a commercial gateway and is currently enjoying a renaissance as a result of its large industrial economy and evolution in all areas of businesses and services.



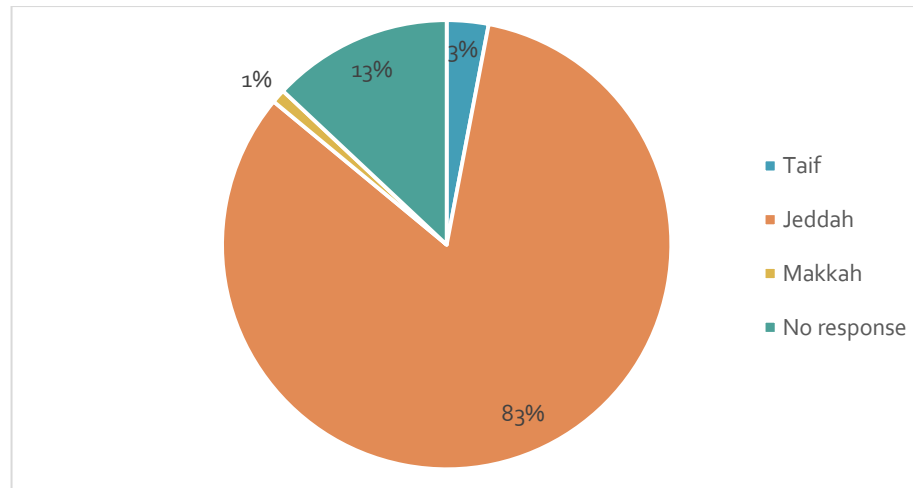


Figure 5-5: Survey responses within the Makkah province (preliminary survey).

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 5.2.1.4 Representation Type

As illustrated in Figure 5-6, the results of the key question posed by the preliminary questionnaire, concerning the preference for a floating dress without a model, or a silhouette wearing the garment, revealed that 39% of the respondents displayed a preference for a floating dress, whereas 61% preferred a silhouette wearing the garment. Since Saudi Arabian society is conservative in nature, this constituted an unanticipated result.

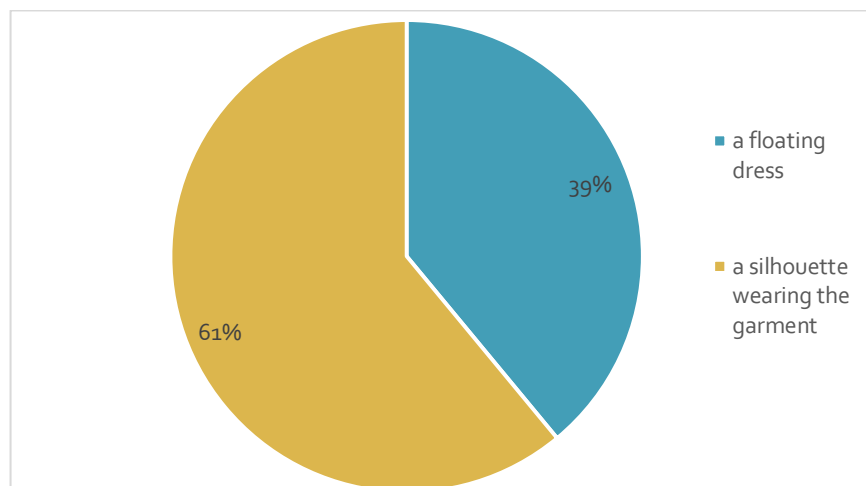


Figure 5-6: Responses to the digital fashion show representation type (preliminary survey).

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Figure 5-7 shows that dramatically different responses were received from the respondents from Jeddah and the Makah region cities of Taif and Makah, in terms of the two different types of fashion show representations, indicating that the participants living in Jeddah were more accepting of the idea of a person displaying a garment, instead of a floating garment.

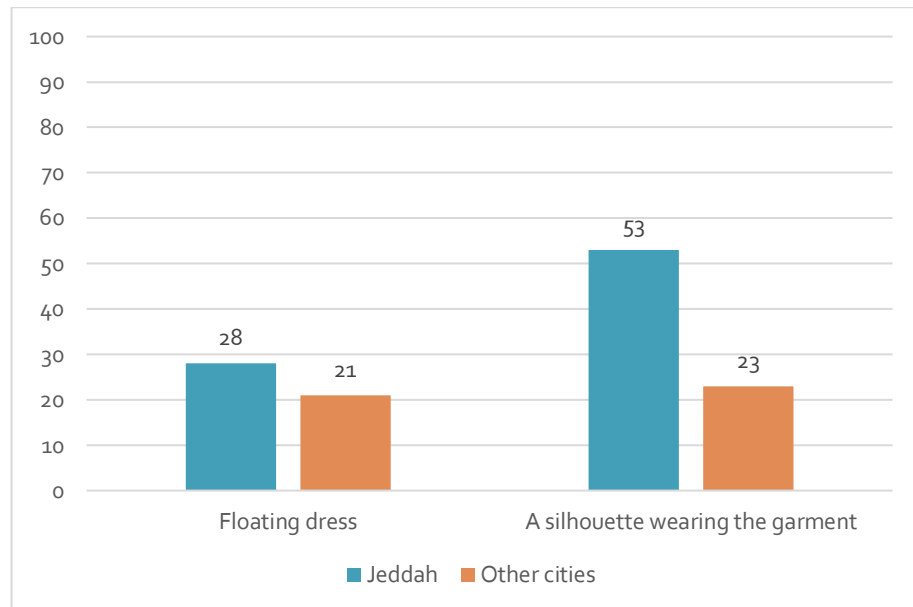


Figure 5-7: Jeddah's responses versus other cities in Saudi Arabia (preliminary survey).

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

When analysing the responses to this question, it was found that the gender affected the response. Figure 5-8 demonstrates that females had a stronger preference for the silhouette than did the males, although both genders preferred the appearance of a silhouette over that of a floating garment.

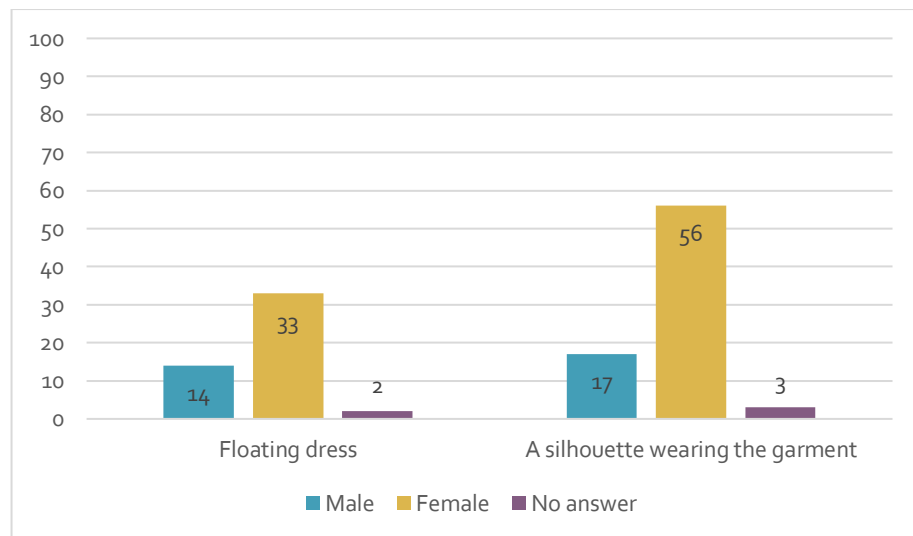


Figure 5-8: Type of garment representation preferred, according to gender (preliminary survey).

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

According to the results of the preliminary survey, it was concluded the preferable form of representation was a silhouette wearing a garment, instead of a floating dress.

### 5.3 Results of Cultural Leaders' Interviews

Since the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is governed by the Islamic Shari'ah system, it is both important and necessary to consider the opinion of the cultural leaders in the country when evaluating the most acceptable form of female representation, in light of both the Islamic rules and Saudi Arabian tradition. This view was sought following the determination that the form of a silhouette modelling a garment in a digital fashion show was preferable to a floating garment.

The interviews in question (Appendix B) were conducted with six cultural leaders (CL) (Table 5-1), and consisted of nine questions under the following five themes: the influence of culture; the audience at fashion shows; the acceptable forms of female representation; the fashion industry, and the acceptability of digital fashion shows.

Table 5-1: Cultural leaders Interviewees Group.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The interviewees and their positions	Organisation
Assistant Professor of Islamic studies	King Abdulaziz University
Head of clothing and textile department	King Abdulaziz University
Religious person	Muslim World League (MWL)
Secretary-General of the Islamic Chamber of commerce, industry, and agriculture in Jeddah	Islamic Chamber of commerce, industry, and agriculture in Jeddah
Secretary-General of the Shari'a board of all Baraka group	The Shari'a board of all Baraka group
Assistant Professor of Law and regulations college in alshari'a department	Altaif University

### 5.3.1 Influence of Culture

This theme explored the influence of culture on perceptions of fashion, since culture is one of the key issues to be explored and evaluated in this research study. In order to assess its influence, the researcher employed open questions to explore whether the participants perceived the most significant culture influence in Saudi Arabia to be tribalism, religion, tradition, costume, background or other aspects, and why this was so, together with their views concerning how these aspects influence Saudi culture.

All of the CL respondents (6/6) agreed that religion constitutes the most significant influence on Saudi culture, since it is considered to be a conservative country in which people respect the opinions of religious figures, a view supported by Nalband and Al-Amri (2013). As one CL said:

*'Saudi Arabia is an Islamic country in which Islam governs all affairs ... and constitutes the greatest influence in the lives of Saudis and their culture. This is followed by customs and traditions, although their influence has been greatly reduced due to societal openness to new fashions, including their role in guiding views concerning women.'*

All of the respondents agreed that religion has a significant influence on gender roles, including that of representations of women, believing that this has engendered the segregation of women in education and in the workplace, for example. In contrast, two CLs mentioned that religion and culture in general do not prevent women from working, rather they encourage women to work and to have an influence on society, since this is beneficial to society in terms of education, healthcare and wealth-generation, although it is only permitted in environments in which women do not mingle with men.

Moreover, one of the CLs involved in the interviews highlighted the fact that Saudi society is divided into very conservative and less conservative sections, wherein the very conservative wear gloves and niqabs covering their face, while the less conservative choose to be more fashionable in their appearance, wearing modern and colourful abayas that do not cover their face.

### 5.3.2 Audience at Fashion Shows

Within this theme, the female interviewees demonstrated a greater interest in fashion shows than the male, and some had attended shows in either Saudi Arabia or in another country. The researcher posed the following open questions:

Have you ever attended a fashion show? If not, why?

Are you accepting of a mixed gender audience at fashion shows? Why, or why not?

Do you think there should be any restrictions on a mixed gender audience at a fashion show? If so, what should those restrictions be?

The majority of the respondents had not attended a fashion show, and only one female interviewee had attended a mixed-gender fashion show. However, the interviewees mentioned the necessity of male/female separation either with a barrier, or with each family sitting together on one table, were they to attend a show. These results reflected those of Cassell and Blake (2012), whose study explored the influence of Islam on all business operations in Saudi Arabia through operational practices that were heavily reliant on Islamic standards and norms.

One of the interviewees said *'I do not support (mixed gender audiences). I'm trying to worship God in all matters and offering mixed-gender fashion shows would not be permitted by the law of Islam. Maintaining the privacy of each sex is vital in Islam, even in a prayer context. The Almighty said: "What was man or woman, if God and His Messenger are to have an option in their decision", which is one of many examples evidencing this fact.'*

In contrast, two of the respondents believed that it would be possible to attend a mixed audience fashion show if it displayed decent clothes. One of the respondents added, *"However, in general, if my daughter or my son wanted to attend mixed audience fashion shows, I would allow them to."*

### 5.3.3 Acceptability of Female Representation

In order to evaluate the views of the acceptable representation of women in public places, the interviewees were given images of the proposed female representations (Figure 5-9 and Figure 5-10), and were asked their opinion regarding what is acceptable in Saudi Arabia, according to religious and cultural viewpoints, and what is not. These images were created according to the responses obtained from the preliminary questionnaire in which a silhouette was chosen for representing garments at a digital fashion show. They were based on different female representations, with different options, including a covered body, an uncovered body, with hair, without hair, and wearing a floating dress. The interviewees were asked the following question: Which image in both Figure 5-9 and Figure 5-10 do you think Saudi society would deem acceptable to be shown in public, and why?



Figure 5-9: Proposed female representations evaluated by the Saudi cultural leaders.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The findings of this theme revealed an agreement among all of the interviewees that women must appear decorous and modest, and that fabrics should not be transparent, nor should the silhouette describe the body.

The majority of the participants agreed that in Figure 5-9, image (A) wearing the blue suit covering the whole body of the model was the most acceptable image in religious, cultural and traditional terms, however image (B) was also deemed to be acceptable by all of the interviewees (five), as it is more modest than image A, although the arms, legs, and hair should be covered.

One of the CLs said: *'In general, what is acceptable is that females should be decent in their clothing. (Islamic) religion includes an edict that women should wear decent clothing, that it shouldn't be transparent, and shouldn't be the kind of a clothing that attracts men. However, if designers produce unattractive designs, they will not achieve any benefits, and will not find an audience, so designs should be inspired by others, and should show women's beauty.'*

Meanwhile, another CL explained that the Arab community does not generally like very dark colours, preferring lighter shades, since the lighter the colour, the closer it aligns with their easy-going nature. Also, Saudi women like beauty in their clothes, as well as coverage, tending to prefer fashions that combine good design with modesty.

In contrast, all of the respondents rejected image C in Figure 5-9, because part of the figure's abdominal area is not covered. Meanwhile, image D was rejected by the majority of the respondents, due to its ghostly appearance, although one respondent believed that the proper means of representing a garment was to avoid depicting any part of the female body. Table 5-2 collates the responses to the question of the proposed female representation, with the numbers reflecting the number of participants choosing the image in question.

Table 5-2: Cultural leaders' responses to the proposed female representations.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)





	A	B	C	D
				
Accept	4	1		1
Accept with conditions	1	5		
Non-acceptance	1		6	
Reject				5





Figure 5-10: Proposed female hair representations evaluated by the cultural leaders.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Meanwhile, since the fashion show will be digital in form, and displayed on a screen, rather than at a live show, Figure 5-10 was produced to assess the participants' views regarding exposing the model's hair and face, and whether they should be covered with a mask, or a bodysuit. All of the interviewees (6/6) agreed that the hair must be covered, therefore images 1, 3, 4, 7 and 9 in Figure 5-10 were deemed to be unacceptable. In terms of images 5 and 8, all of the interviewees (6/6) agreed that the mask in images 5 and 8 draws attention and was therefore considered to be unacceptable. Meanwhile, four out six interviewees considered that images 2 and 6 were acceptable, since no hair was represented, although the lack of facial expression made the images appear unnatural. The results therefore revealed with it is preferable to show the face in a natural form, without makeup.

In summary, all of the respondents believed that live fashion shows went beyond being a marketing and advertising tool for designs, and since the models display their body, and walk in a seductive manner, watching such shows is forbidden by Islamic rules.

Furthermore, according to the responses received during the interviews, in order for a female's appearance to be acceptable in public, she must obey the Islamic rules of how women should be represented, in terms of garments not describing the body, and rather being loose, long, and not transparent. She should cover her body either with a garment or use a bodysuit. In addition, the woman's hair should be covered, and she should not be adorned with anything that draws attention, such as a mask or makeup.

### 5.3.4 Fashion Industry

As discussed in section 5.3, only the female interviewees (2/6) were interested in fashion shows, and consequently only the female participants were asked the questions related to the fashion industry. In order to explore their views of the industry, the researcher posed the following open-ended questions:

- Do you think that the fashion industry is important for growing the country's income? Why?
- What are the obstacles facing the fashion industry's growth?

All of the participants agreed that the fashion industry is important, and that the Saudi government should support it, and give greater importance to the industry by increasing the number of related factories. One CL mentioned that the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce is beginning to unite a number of designers under its umbrella and has forged connections between themselves and other governmental sectors in order to support designers and the fashion industry.

With regard to the obstacles facing the fashion industry, and their impact on fashion shows, all of the interviewees confirmed that the local fashion industry suffers from a lack of fashion designers, manufacturers, advertisements, and even fashion shows, which means that it lags behind the global fashion industry. One CL said that *"The fashion industry is very limited. There are not many designers, manufacturers, or fashion shows, or even fashion advertisements, and this keeps us behind global fashion"*. While the other added that *"The problem is that this is an important sector, and the Saudi market is full*

*of imported garments, which means that national manufacturers are overwhelmed by products imported from China, or elsewhere.”*

Both of the interviewees believed that the fashion industry is important for growing the country’s economy, with one CL asserting that *“if there is a significant amount of production of worthy products for the right people, there will be a more sales, which will generate more income, which will produce investment in more purchasing, which will increase the production of manufacturers. It is a circle.”*

### 5.3.5 Acceptance of Digital Fashion Shows

As discussed in the previous section, all of the interview participants agreed that the proposed representation of women should cover the whole body of the model, and that the hair should also be covered. In order to explore the opinions of the CL regarding the acceptance of a digital fashion show in a public place, the researcher asked an open-ended question in respect of the possibility of presenting live, digital fashion shows on a screen in public places, using a silhouette to display the garment, instead of a real woman. The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents agreed that such a show would be acceptable, provided that the figures were wearing decent clothing that does not reveal or describe the body. Hence, when these shows are presented via photographs, the television, or websites, it would not conflict with Islamic rules.

One CL said that *“the idea of employing a simulation of reality, which blurs the features of the face, and does not show what it is not permitted to show is acceptable.”*

Meanwhile, another CL stated explicitly that one of the conditions of the hijab is that it should cover the body, except for the hands and face, and that women should wear loose clothes, not clothes that are tight or transparent, and that they should be made of thick enough fabric that it does not reveal or describe the features of the body.

Another CL specified that it is important to differentiate between religion and tradition in order to display the beauty of the Islamic religion, which is tolerant and balanced, although traditions and customs can overshadow religion, for example,

professing that a woman should not go out without wearing an abaya on their head, or without their niqab, claiming that the face is exposed, when it is not. He further added

*“I conducted research about the veil of Islamic women, but was not allowed to print or submit it until I included the fact that women’s face should not be exposed. Even then, I was not allowed to publish it, and when we discussed women’s problems regarding the workplace, I was pushed to talk about covering the whole face. Well, that was 25 years ago. Now things have changed, but our traditions and customs still control us, although our religion is not like that. It’s simple, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia does not represent Islam, and we can’t see the beauty of our religion.”*

Exhibiting a different viewpoint, one CL considered fashion shows to be a sin, believing that if such a show is presented digitally on a screen at a mall, all of the people present will assist in spreading the sin among the community. In addition, he stated that it is preferable for a person wishing to sin to do so privately, for example at home, instead of spreading it to the rest of the community in public areas. The same CL added that it is preferable for the model to be animated, rather than being a real model.

In conclusion, the Islamic religion constitutes the greatest influence on the Saudi Arabia culture, which affects the female representation in public, and how both genders are represented when they are in the same place, which results in gender segregation. However, the concept of the digital fashion show was not rejected by the interviewees, on the condition that the models are dressed in clothing that does not reveal the body, or describe it, and that their hair is covered. The interviewees considered that this is because of a recognition that the Saudi community tends toward fashions that combine good design with modesty. While the majority of the interviewees accepted the concept of an on-screen public digital fashion show, provided the model wears modest clothing, some rejected the idea as a form of sin, preferring that such a show be viewed privately, in order that the sin is not spread within the community.

The fashion industry is currently suffering from lack of advertisements and fashion shows, which means that the local industry lags behind the international fashion industry. Digital fashion shows are fruitful, and their use within the fashion industry is growing at

a notable rate through the innovative developments of the digital economy (Batista, 2013). The primary element of these digital shows is the variety of technological tools that are being employed by contemporary fashion designers and merchants, and these technological innovations are now shaping digital fashion shows (Batista, 2013).

### 5.4 Results of the Observation

The observation occurred in the following three stages: at stores, on social media, and in printed media, in order to observe how fashion is displayed via each platform, and to assess the differences and similarities between each. Both local and international stores in major shopping malls in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, were visited and observed. In addition, local and international fashion magazines sold in Saudi Arabia were assessed, and the images included were compared with those in the digital version of the same magazine, published online. Also, social media of Saudi designers has been examined in terms of how models are presenting the garments.

#### 5.4.1 Promotion in Stores

International brands and stores are widespread in the Saudi market, where no shopping centre lacks an international brand. These stores are subject to the advertising regulations produced by the Saudi Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs. These include Resolution No. 3.1.12, which is a technical requirement for boards of propaganda and advertising, dated June 15, 2002. It states that it is prohibited to place advertisements in any area, if the content of the advertisement and its format is not compatible with the Islamic religion, and does not conform to the customs and traditions stemming from the religion (The Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs, 2002). In addition, the Law of Printed Materials and Publication (2003), Royal Decree No. M/32, dated November 29, 2000, states in Article Nine that when permission is given for a printed matter to be produced, the following shall be taken into consideration: "*It shall not conflict with Sharia Rules (Islamic rules)*" (The Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs, 2002).

Meanwhile, external printed matters are only approved if they are free from anything insulting to Islam, or to the system of government, or are otherwise not injurious

to the interests of the state, do not affect public morality, or conflict with ethical standards. However, there is no clear definition of what is meant by phrase, *“the advertisement must comply with the Muslim religion”*.

Through visits to shopping malls in Jeddah, such as the Red Sea Mall, and the Mall of Arabia, in the period between December 2015 and January 2016, the following observations were made:

- There was no female photographic imagery in the stores;
- Most of the mannequins were headless;
- The mannequins were covered by clothes, from the chest area to the knees;
- These garments can be fitted on the mannequins;
- Most salespersons were men, except in some departments, such as lingerie and beauty, in which a saleswoman was present;
- All types of garments, including active wear, evening wear, and maternity wear were displayed in the store windows, with the exception of lingerie and nightdresses, unlike in European stores where these items are freely displayed. This is due to the aforementioned Resolution No. 3.1.12 of the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs;
- In the international stores, saleswomen wore some of the store’s items in order to display the pieces as an additional form of promotion. However, this was not the case in Saudi Arabian stores, where the saleswomen only wore abayas. Figure 5-11 shows examples of the representation of garments in shops in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.



Figure 5-11: Examples of international brands displayed in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 5.4.2 Promotion in Printed Media

Fashion is widely promoted in magazines in Saudi Arabia, but according to the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs' rules governing advertisement, certain restrictions exist in terms of female representation. However, it has been found that more freedom exists in the images of women in the online versions of magazines. For example, through a comparison of the images in magazines sold in Saudi Arabia, such as Laha magazine, with their electronic versions, the same image sometimes differed in its



on-line context, with woman depicted uncovered between the dress and their knees, such as in Figure 5-12. The first picture (A) was taken from Laha magazine, issue number 797, 2015, while the second (B) is an electronic copy of the same magazine. The difference between the images is clear, with the model in picture (A) depicted with her dress shaded in between the hem and the knees. Also, the hair has been digitally modified to give more volume to the women presented in the image to cover the back of her shoulders. Similar examples were found in all magazines observed where an online version was available.



Figure 5-12: Differences between a magazine image and an online image.

(Source: (A) Laha Magazine, 2015; (B): Laha Magazine online, 2015)

It was noticeable that most Saudi women are shown in printed magazines with a head scarf even though she is not covering all her hair and showing a bit of her hair: this might be due to cultural issues and respecting the Islamic religion. Also, some digital modifications are done to the dresses of the females, where magazine editors colour part of the body with the same dress colour to show a longer and more modest dress or



garment. In some magazines, women are shown from their back view rather than their front view such as Figure 5-12. These modifications are applied in all magazines in Saudi Arabia whether it is a Saudi or non-Saudi magazine.

### 5.4.3 Promotion in Social Media

In Saudi Arabia, social media offers the designer more freedom in displaying their products to consumers, since, to date, no governmental restrictions apply to social media imagery, although this may change. Therefore, 50 Instagram accounts have been observed and analysed in terms of the presentation of the model and garments. Customers have begun to use Instagram to buy clothes by contacting the designer or seller through direct messages. However, the negative aspects of this approach are that the customers are usually not able to claim a refund after purchasing if they do not like the product once it arrives. Nevertheless, many designers employ social media to display their collections, such as Figure 5-13.



Figure 5-13: A range of female representations by Saudi designers on social media (Instagram).

(Source: (A) Raniakhogeer (2016); (B) Lum\_bylamataher (2012); (C) Razanalazzouni (2016); (D) koban (2016))

Although there is currently no censorship of the images on social media, it appears from Figure 5-13 that designers tend to design modest clothes. Social media enables fashion designers to choose their means of female representation, and to employ either a mannequin or a female model to assist in promoting their designs, as Figure 5-13 illustrates. Fashion designers have the freedom to present the model in the presentation

he/she prefers, which means some fashion designers prefer to show the hair of the model. On the other hand, other designers prefer not to show the head or face. Other fashion designers prefer to use mannequins to display their designs.

While the designers do not intend this form of advertising to replace presenting their collections at fashion shows, such shows have a women-only monopoly, with even media photography at the events prohibited, and they can only be held with governmental permission. Therefore, social media offers the designers an alternative means to advertise and to sell their collections.

### 5.5 Results of Consumer Survey 1

The purpose of this survey (Appendix F, G) was to explore consumers' opinions regarding digital fashion shows and to determine their opinions concerning the most acceptable form of female representation, in light of the cultural leaders' views. This survey has recorded 125 responses. The survey focused on ascertaining the acceptable representations of women for a publicly-exhibited, digital fashion show. Accordingly, the questionnaire was designed to do the following:

- Explore the cultural issues involved in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia;
- Explore the potential for digital fashion shows as a suitable alternative to live shows;
- Ascertain the acceptable imagery, or representation of women, in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia.

The questionnaire was constructed to five parts, as below:

Part 1: Personal information about the respondent;

Part 2: Questions about the respondent's purchasing habits;

Part 3: Questions about the respondent's views of fashion shows;

Part 4: Questions about the respondent's views of digital fashion shows;

Part 5: Questions about the respondent's views regarding the representation of the model.

- The process of analysis

In order to support the data analysis, the results were recorded and analysed in Excel. As previously discussed in section 4.3.6.1, the questionnaire was originally created in English, but since Arabic is the first language in Saudi Arabia, it was necessary to translate it into Arabic for the data collection phase. All of the data was entered automatically in an Excel spreadsheet, however, since the questions were in Arabic, it was necessary to translate them into English for the analysis process.

The first part of the questionnaire was concerned with personal information, such as the age, gender, nationality, qualification, specialisation, and occupation of the respondent.

### 5.5.1 Personal Information

#### 5.5.1.1 Age

The majority of respondents to the questionnaire (32%) were aged between 25 and 30 years. The second largest group (26%) were aged between 31 and 35 years. Nearly (17%) of the respondents were aged between either 36 and 40, or 46 and 50 years, while the lowest percentage of respondents (8%) was aged between 41 and 45 years. Figure 5-14 represent the study sample in terms of age.

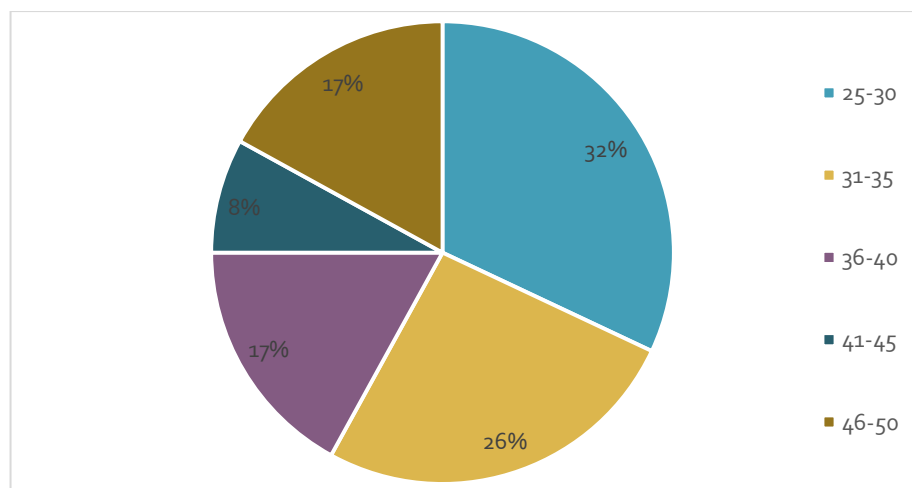


Figure 5-14: The study sample in terms of age in percentage.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

### 5.5.1.2 Gender

The majority of the survey respondents (71%) were female, while 29% were male. Figure 5-15 illustrate the sample's distribution in terms of gender.

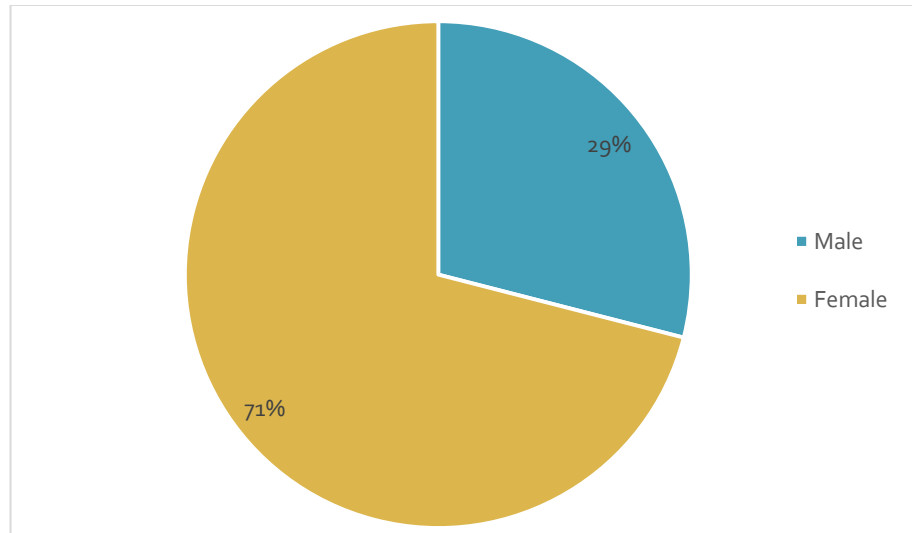


Figure 5-15: The study sample in terms of gender.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

### 5.5.1.3 Regions

The results of this section revealed that the majority of the participants were from the Makah region, representing 60% of the sample, while the representation from the other regions ranged from 14% to 3%, with the Qassem, Hail, and Baha regions possessing the lowest representation of 0.6%, 0.3%, and 0.6%, respectively. This result aligned with the findings of the preliminary survey, in which the majority of the respondents were from the Makah region of Jeddah, Taif, and Makah. While the other regions such as Madina and Riyadh had a low response rate. As discussed in 5.2.1.3, the reason for this disparity in the results is that this region is a multicultural province that is more open to wider views (Ham et al., 2004). Figure 5-16 presents these results in detail.

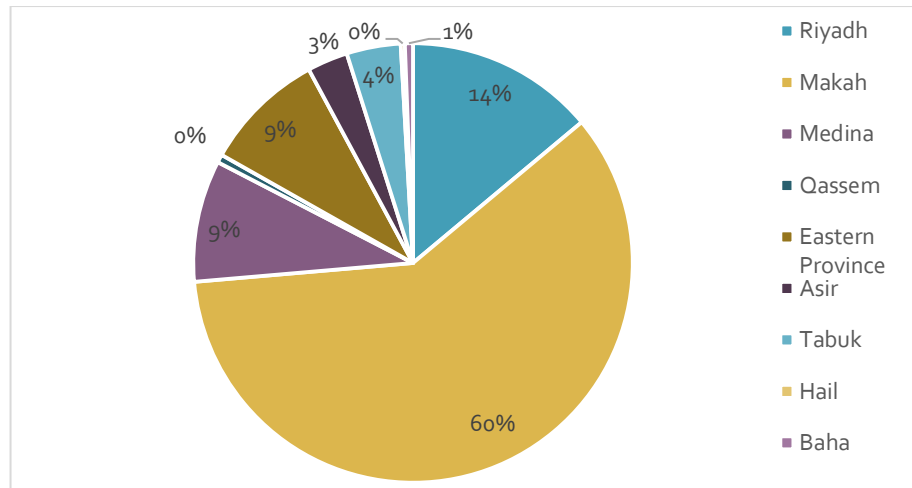


Figure 5-16: Response rates according to the different Saudi Arabian regions.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 5.5.1.4 Educational Qualifications

This section of the questionnaire was concerned with the educational qualifications of the respondents, in order to determine their knowledge and understanding of fashion issues in general. It was found that the largest group of respondents to the survey (46%) held Bachelor's degrees, while 27% held Master's degrees, and 15% held a Ph.D. The results also revealed that 6% of the respondents held only a high school level qualification, or lower, and 6% held a diploma. Figure 5-17 present the results in detail.

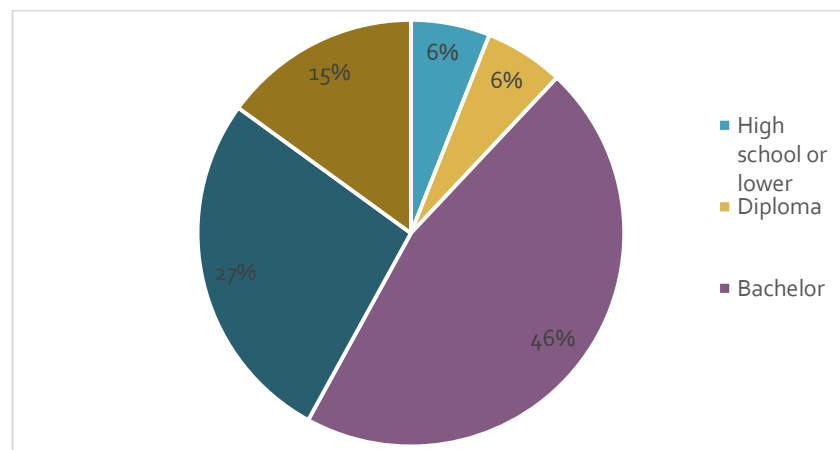


Figure 5-17: The educational qualifications of the study sample.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

### 5.5.2 Purchasing Habits

The results of the question 'How often on an average do you buy clothes from: stores, online websites and social media' revealed that purchasing from stores was the most common method for buying clothes among the study sample, with 61% responding 'Always', 29% 'Very often', and only 7% of participants responding that they only sometimes buy from stores, and 3% responding 'Never'.

In contrast, when reporting whether they purchase from online websites, such as Souq.com and Amazon, 33% responded 'Very often', 30% 'Sometimes', 19% 'Always', and 17% 'Never'.

Social media channels, such as such as Instagram, help by allowing viewing the product via a social media channel, then contacting the designer through a direct message. The purchase is completed by either paying in person and collecting the item at a store, or having the item mailed and paying either online through the designer's website, or by paying the carrier. This eases the purchase process and offers different options to the consumer. The majority of the survey respondents (35%) replied that they use this means of purchasing 'Never', while 29% replied 'Very often', 23% 'Sometimes', and 13% 'Always'.

These results indicated that the majority of the respondents preferred to purchase directly from stores, a method that allows the consumer to see the clothes in person, although this assumes that the clothes displayed on a store dummy reflect the actual appearance of the item on a real person. This concurred with the findings of Hope (2016) in his BBC report, which stated that purchasing still occurs in shops, where the retailers are able to witness the consumers' actions. Also, this finding reflected that of Torres' (2016) study, which compared purchasing online and in-store, and which indicated that although purchasing through online websites and social media possesses many advantages, such as product selection, availability, and lower prices, purchasing directly from stores possesses more benefits, such as negating the need to wait for the product to arrive through the mail, lower taxes, customer service, warranties, returns, exchanges, and security. Figure 5-18 illustrates the purchasing habits of the study sample in detail.

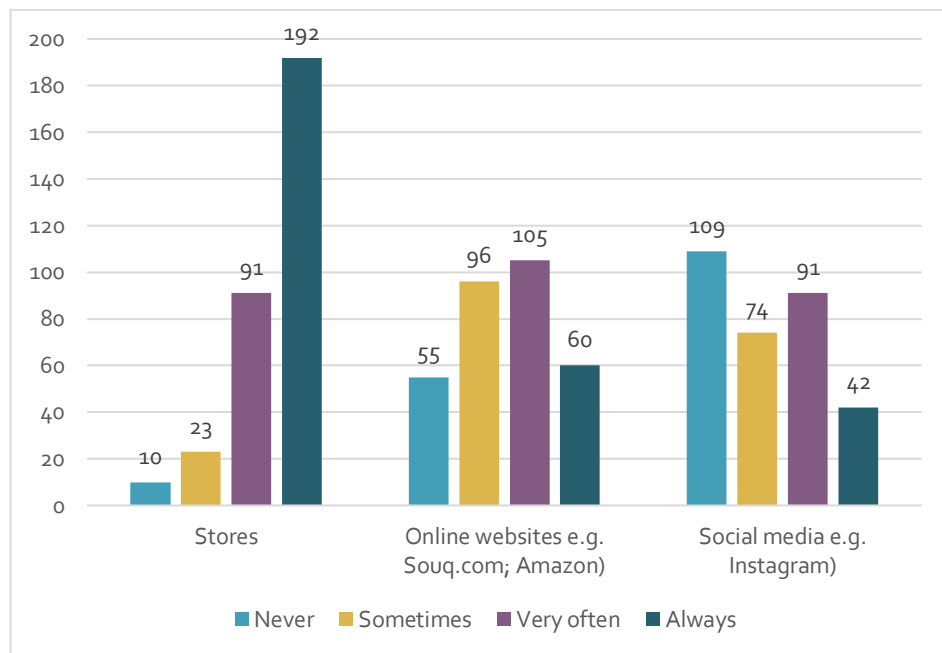


Figure 5-18: Study sample's purchasing habits in chart form.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

When asked about whether they purchase clothes from local stores, or from abroad, the results of the survey showed that 55% of the survey sample shop abroad, whereas 45% shop in Saudi Arabia, a result that concurred with the findings of Kitching (2015). The lack of enthusiasm for shopping in Saudi Arabia can be related to the representation of clothing in the local market, as well as the fact that Saudis often travel abroad as tourists, and consequently shop in the countries they visit.

Although a substantial number of the survey participants (45%) responded that they shop in Saudi Arabia, Kitching's (2015) study found that Saudi tourists take at least one holiday each year and spend as much as six times the amount of Western tourists on shopping trips abroad every year. Consequently, supporting fashion shows in Saudi Arabia may enhance the promotion of the local fashion industry, since such shows play an essential role in the marketing of the clothes manufactured by Saudi designers, and the subsequent sale of their products within the markets of Saudi Arabia.

Figure 5-19 illustrates the predominant clothing purchasing behaviours of the study sample.

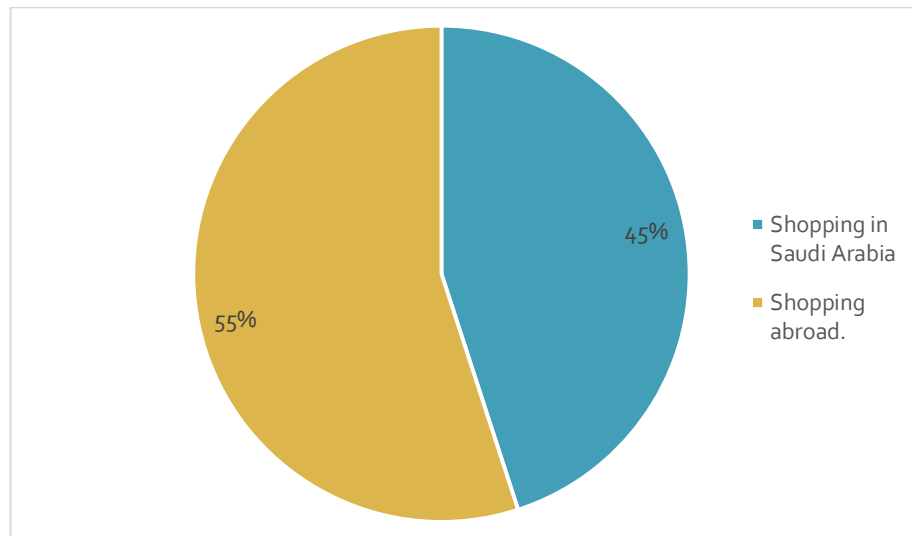


Figure 5-19: Predominant clothing purchasing behaviours in percentage.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

### 5.5.3 Attendance at Fashion Shows

This section examined the attendance of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, when they had been asked 'have you ever attended a fashion show in Saudi Arabia' with the results confirming that the majority of the respondents (80%) had not attended any fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, while 20% had attended such a show. This result may have been due in part to the dearth of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, which aligns with the findings of Trenwith's (2015) study, which indicated that the Saudi Council of Chambers has reportedly banned fashion shows, a decision taken because Saudi Arabia is a conservative Muslim country with strict rules governing public appearance that require women to wear a dark-coloured abaya. Figure 5-20 illustrates the results of this section.



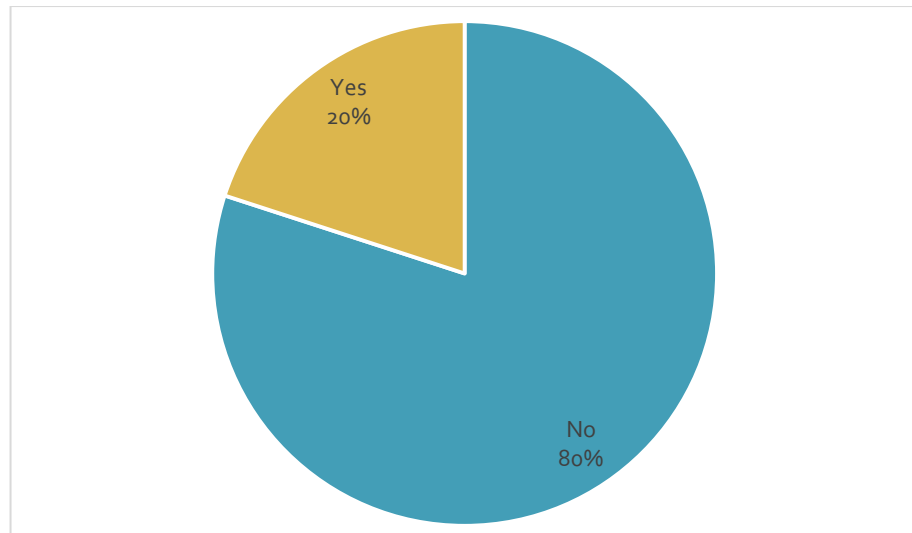


Figure 5-20: Attendance at fashion shows in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The sample reported, when they had been asked ‘how often on average do you go to a fashion show?’ that on average, the frequency of this attendance was every 6 months for 4% of the participants and annually for 16% of the participants, as illustrated in Figure 5-21.

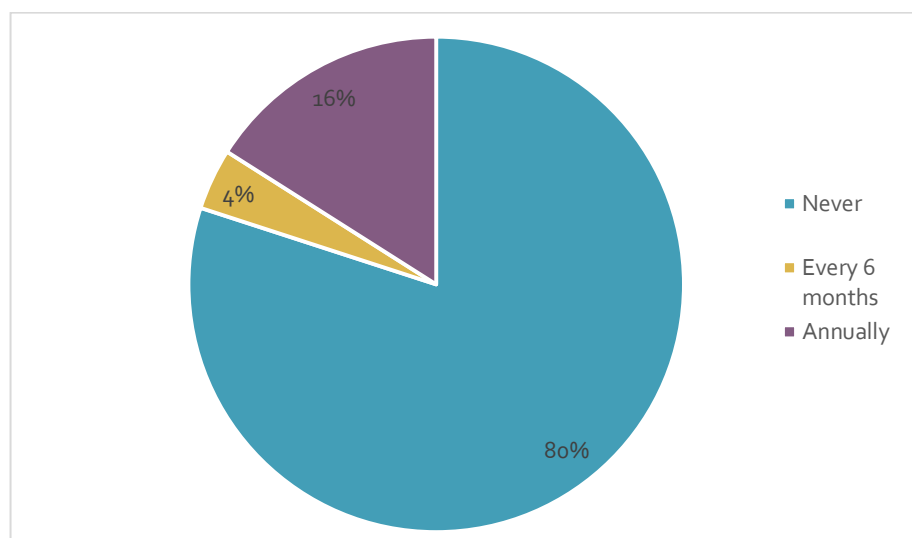


Figure 5-21: Frequency of attendance at fashion shows.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The results of the survey, presented in Figure 5-22, indicated that the majority of the respondents (132) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, ‘Saudi Arabian society is interested in fashion shows’, whereas 125 respondents were neutral toward the statement: according to Alkhatib (2014) this result means the respondent has no opinion on the subject.

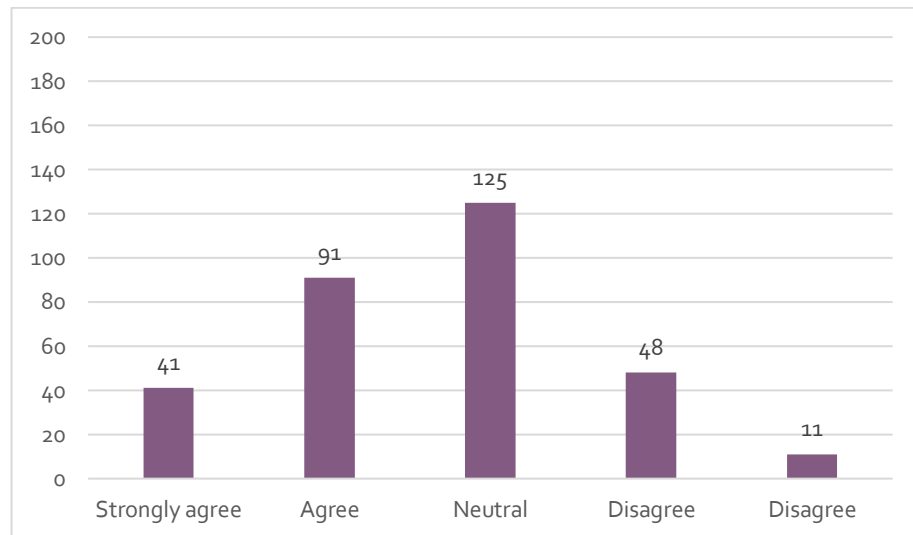


Figure 5-22: Interest of Saudi Arabian society in fashion shows.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

With regard to the appropriateness of fashion shows in terms of Saudi Arabian customs and traditions, it was found that the majority of the participants (169) held a neutral view toward the statement ‘fashion shows in Saudi Arabia fit with the customs and traditions of Saudi Arabia’, which is logical as most of the participants had not attended a fashion show. Figure 5-23 reflects this result.

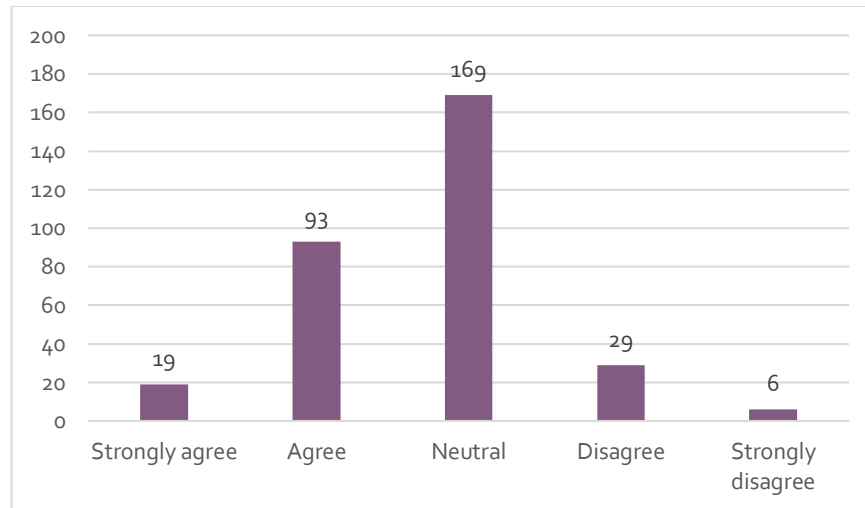


Figure 5-23: Appropriateness of fashion shows in terms of the customs and traditions of Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 5.5.4 Digital Fashion Shows

In this section, the researcher asked the participants whether a digital fashion show would be an appropriate means of replacing real models in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. The findings revealed agreement on the part of the majority of the respondents (198), as illustrated in Figure 5-24.

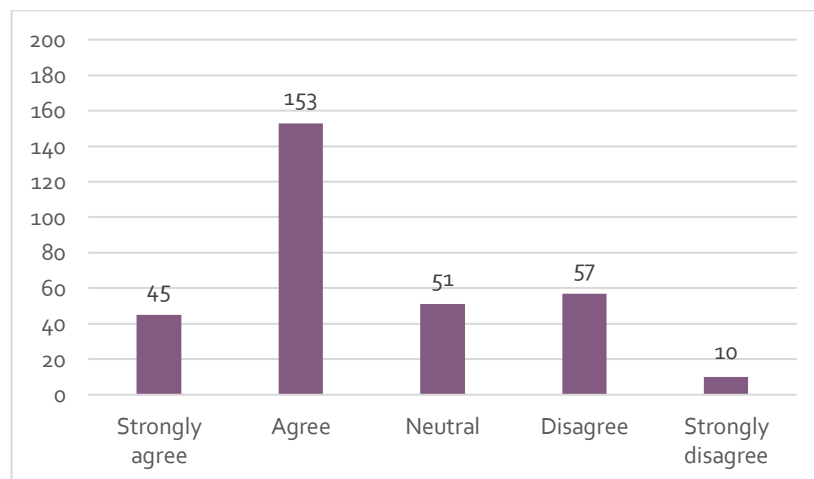


Figure 5-24: Responses to the statement 'The digital fashion (video) is an appropriate means of replacing real models in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia'.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

In relation to the question, ‘Do you agree that the model’s appearance in digital fashion shows will affect the acceptability of the fashion show?’, it was found that the majority of the participants (236) agreed, although the responses also reflected a range of neutral (39), disagree (34), and strongly disagree (7), as illustrated in Figure 5-25.

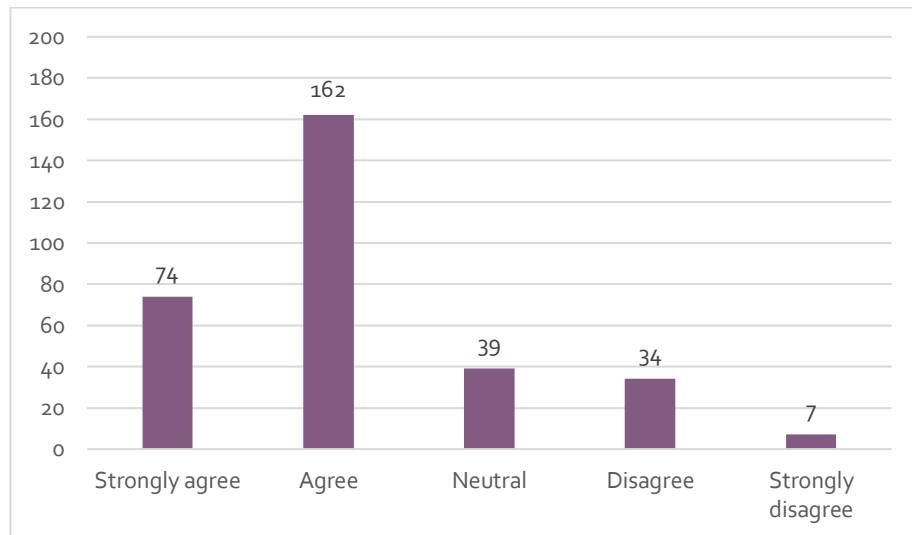


Figure 5-25: Responses to the statement ‘The model’s appearance in digital fashion shows will affect the acceptability of the fashion show.’

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The questionnaire also asked the respondents whether they agree that a digital fashion show would improve the quality of in-store clothing displays. While the majority of the participants agreed (242), the responses to this question also included disagreement (37), and no opinion (47), as illustrated in Figure 5-26. This result confirmed the findings of Charlton (2013) and Taft (2015), whose studies concerned the increase in customer engagement with interactive digital technology.

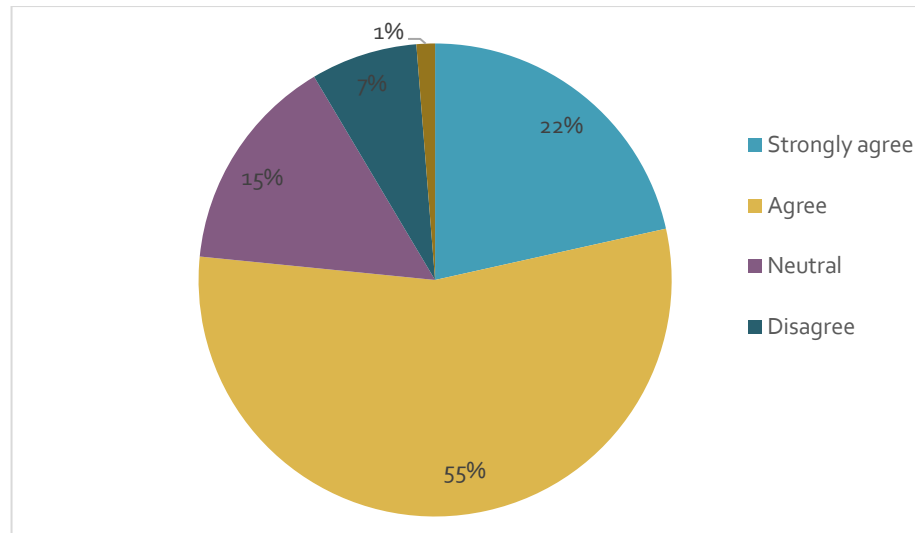


Figure 5-26: Responses to the question 'Do you agree that the digital fashion show will improve the quality of in-store clothing displays.'

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 5.5.5 Digital Model Representation

In this section, the researcher asked whether the appearance of the digital model would affect the acceptability of a fashion show, and the findings confirmed that the majority of the respondents agreed that it would, with 86 of the respondents strongly agreeing, and 179 agreeing. However, a small number (5) strongly disagreed, 27 disagreed, and 19 were neutral. These results were optimistic in the view of the researcher, as this degree of approval for the concept might, in time, help to support the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia. Figure 5-27 shows the results of this section in detail.

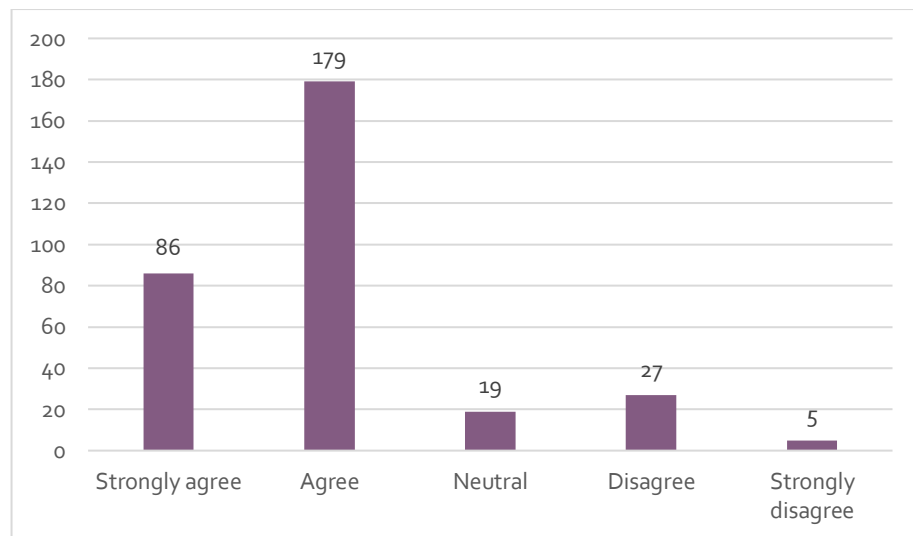


Figure 5-27: Responses to the question, 'Do you agree that the appearance of the model will affect the acceptability of a fashion show?'

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Meanwhile, 103 of the respondents strongly agreed and 151 agreed that some restrictions must be placed on the style of clothes to be modelled in the digital fashion show, while 30 disagreed, and 12 strongly disagreed. This reflected that fact that the majority (59%) of the respondents agreed that there should be restrictions on the clothes to be modelled in a digital fashion show. Figure 5-28 presents the results in full.

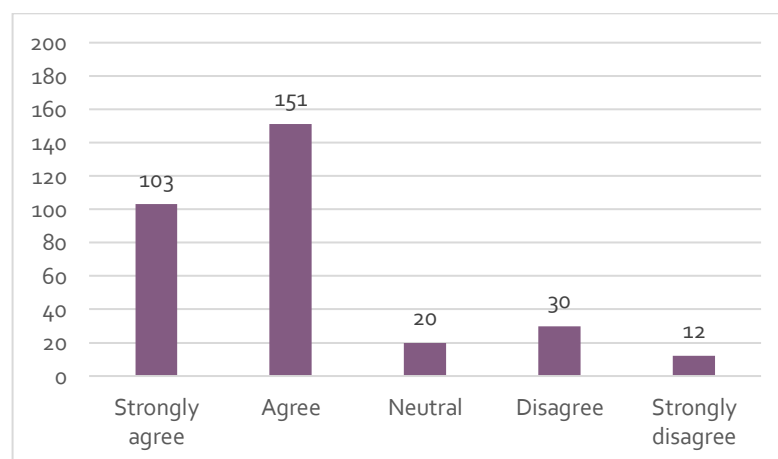


Figure 5-28: Responses to the question, 'Do you agree that there must be some restrictions on the clothes to be modelled in a digital fashion show?'

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The survey also asked, ‘Do you agree that the show should expose the model’s facial features (eyes, nose, etc.) clearly?’. The result revealed that the majority of the participants (133) agreed, and 55 strongly agreed that the model’s facial features should be exposed. However, 64 of the respondents disagreed and 22 strongly disagreed. The results are presented in Figure 5-29.

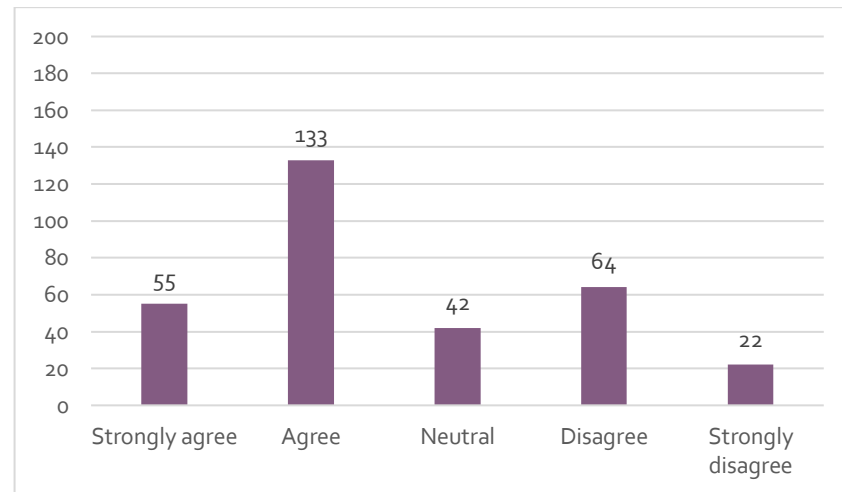


Figure 5-29: Responses to the question, ‘Do you agree that a digital fashion show should expose the model’s facial features (eyes, nose, etc.) clearly?’

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The survey also asked whether the model’s skin colour should be altered in the digital fashion show, in order to disguise the original body colour. The question asked, ‘Do you agree that the model’s skin colour should be changed in a digital fashion show, in order to disguise the original body colour?’. The results revealed that 169 of respondents disagreed, with 119 disagreeing, and 50 strongly disagreeing. However, 90 of the participants agreed, with 18 strongly agreeing and 72 agreeing with changing the model’s skin colour. Figure 5-30 illustrates the results of this question in detail.

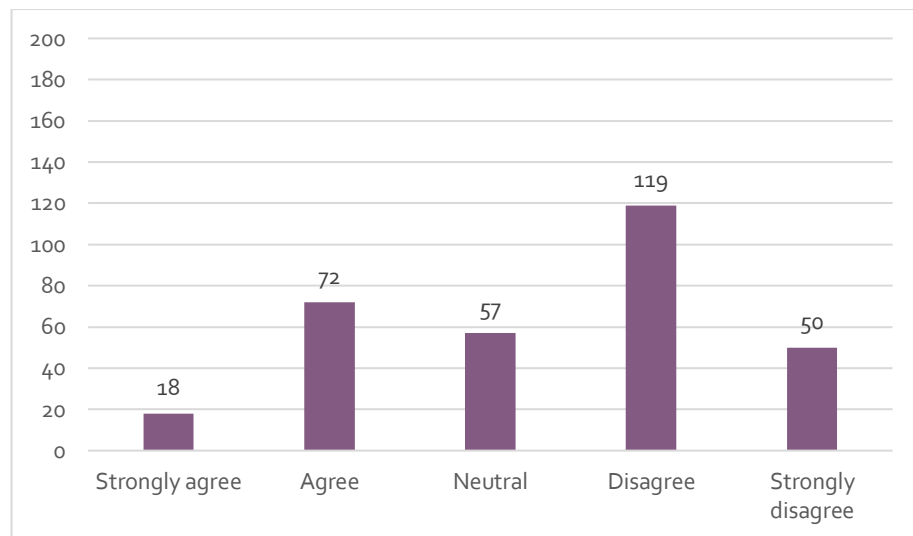


Figure 5-30: Responses to the question, 'Do you agree the model's skin colour should be changed in a digital fashion show, in order to disguise the original body colour?'

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The next question asked the respondents, 'Do you agree that the appearance of the model's hair, as shown in Figure 5-31, is acceptable for a digital fashion show?'

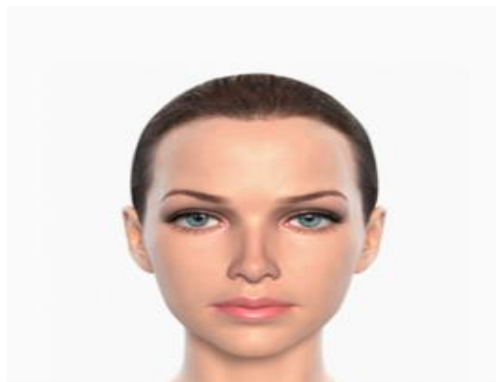


Figure 5-31: Appearance of the model's hair.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The result revealed that the majority of the participants (184) did not agree with the exposure of the model's hair, although 88 did agree, and 44 did not express an opinion. These results are unsurprising in a society such as that of Saudi Arabia, whose rules are



derived from the Qur'an, which calls on women to dress modestly, and to cover the whole body, including the head and hair. Figure 5-32 illustrates the findings of this question.

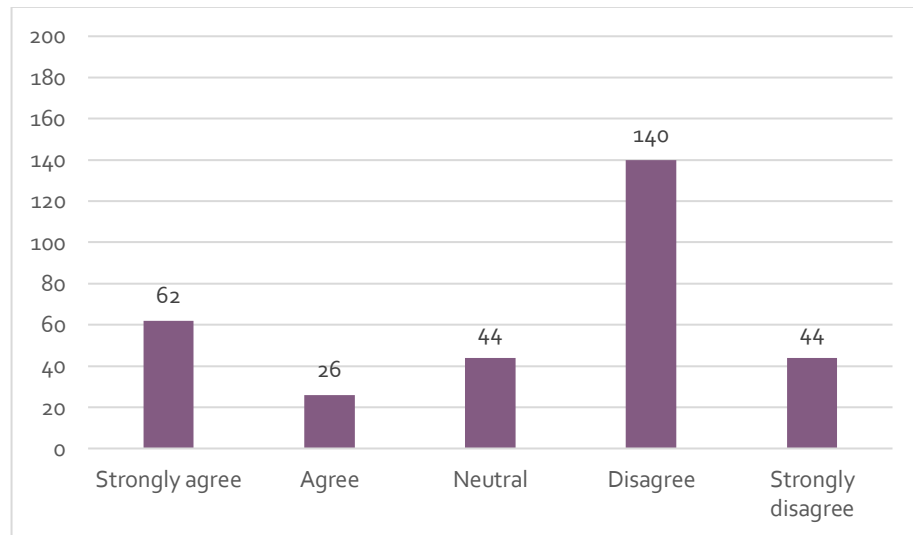


Figure 5-32: Responses to the question, 'Do you agree that the appearance of the model's hair, as shown in figure 5-31, is acceptable for the digital fashion show?'

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The next question in the survey asked, 'Do you agree that a headless model is preferable in a digital fashion show?', referring the participants to the image below in Figure 5-33.



Figure 5-33: The headless model.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

As Figure 5-34 illustrates, 24 respondents strongly agreed that a headless model should be employed in the video fashion show and 81 agreed. However, the majority of the respondents (115) disagreed and 64 strongly disagreed.

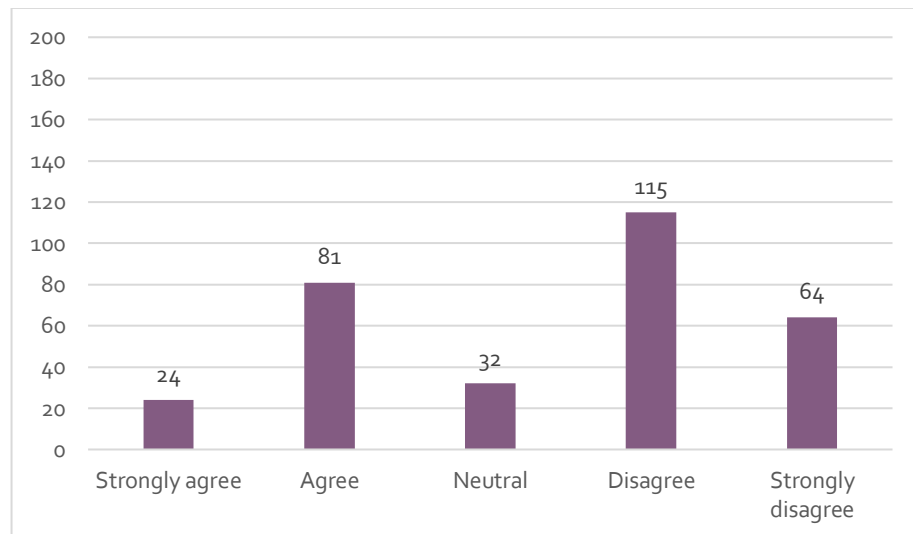


Figure 5-34: Responses to the question, ‘Do you agree that a headless model is preferable in a digital fashion show?’

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

In order to evaluate the acceptable forms of female representation for a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia, the researcher asked the survey respondents to indicate which images in Figure 5-35 they found acceptable, bearing in mind that the white in the image is used to disguise the body, and could be altered to any colour.

The findings revealed that the most acceptable image was A (274 respondents), followed by image E (259), then image I (256). In contrast, the most unacceptable image (189 respondents) was image D, then image H (181), and image C (175). As the results demonstrate, the acceptability of the image was based on whether the bodies of the models were covered or not, since the garments in images A, B, E, F, and I cover the model’s body, while those in images C, D, G, and H are shorter dresses that reveal part of the body. Accordingly, the respondents preferred images A, E, and I, due to the full body coverage. Meanwhile, in terms of the body colour, the natural body version was

preferred, as opposed to the coloured body, with the shorter dresses were deemed to be unacceptable, even on the coloured body.

Figure 5-35 presents the images provided to the survey respondents and Figure 5-36 illustrates the responses to this question in detail.



Figure 5-35: Images employed for the question, 'Indicate which images are acceptable as a female representation for a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.'

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

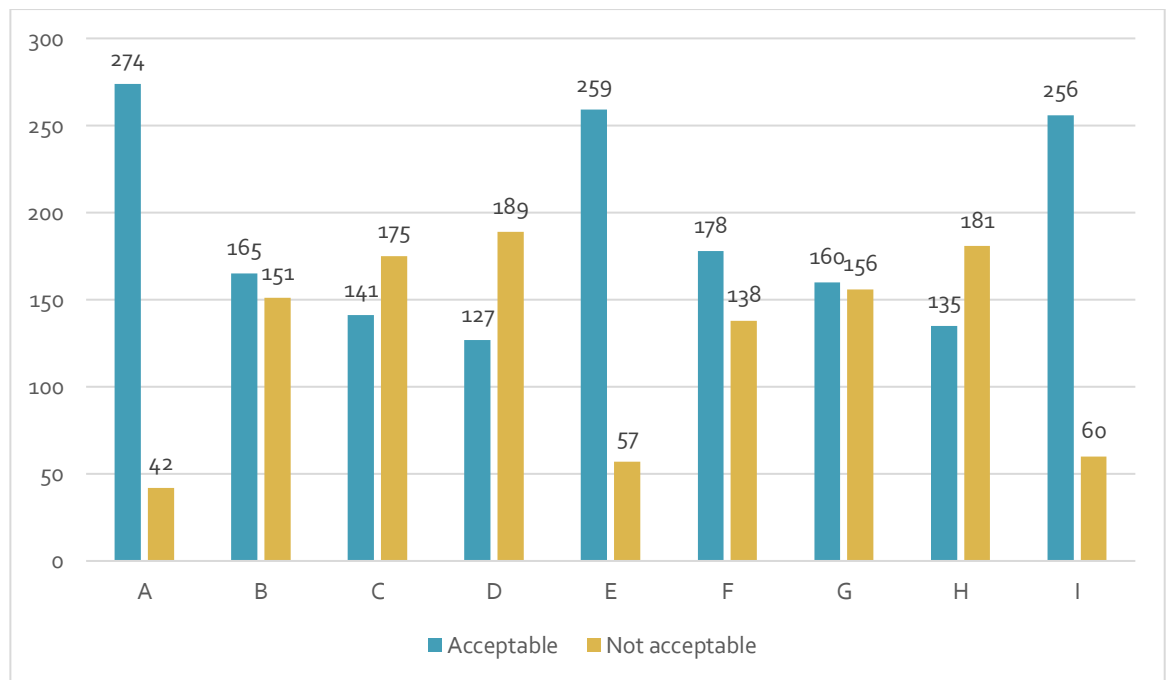


Figure 5-36: Responses to the question, 'Indicate which images are acceptable as a female representation for a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.'

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The next question in the survey sought to assess which of the images presented in Figure 5-37 were deemed to be acceptable for a representation of the model's head in a digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia. The question asked, 'Indicate which images are acceptable as a representation of a woman's head for a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia' and the respondents were provided with the images in Figure 5-37.

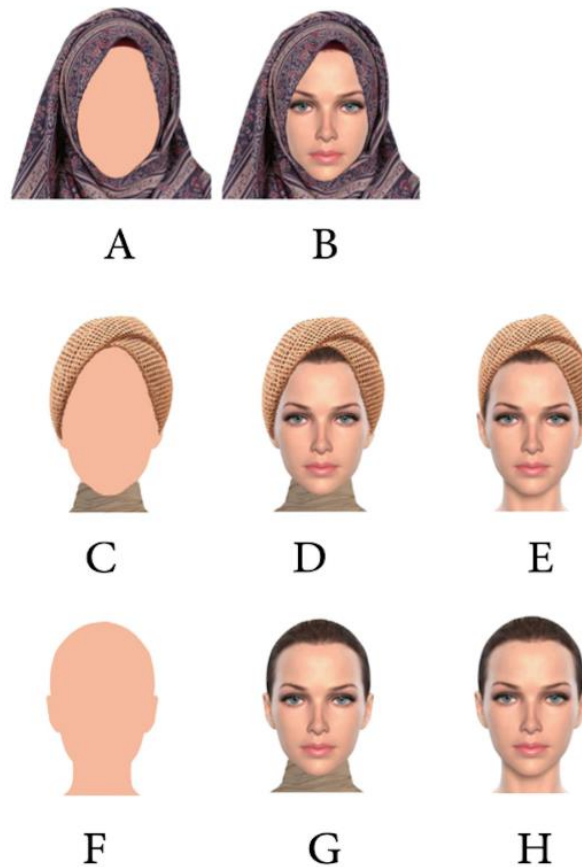


Figure 5-37: The images for the representation of the model's head for a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The results indicated that the most acceptable images were image B (262), then image D (235), followed by image E (224), while the most unacceptable images were image F (203), image C (188), and image A (185). The model's head represented in images A, B, C, D, and E has her hair covered, while images F, G, and H represent the model's head without a hair covering. Hence, the results revealed that the images in which the model's hair is covered were deemed to be the most acceptable, while images A and C also represent a model with covered facial features as well as covered hair. The acceptability of the images was therefore dependent on the extent to which they are compatible with the teachings and regulations of Islam, in relation to the hijab for women. However, it is notable that there was a strong negative reaction to the images

where the figure is shown in silhouette/ without facial features. Also, it is notable that this negative reaction was stronger than that of the participants to uncovered hair. These results are presented in detail in Figure 5-38.

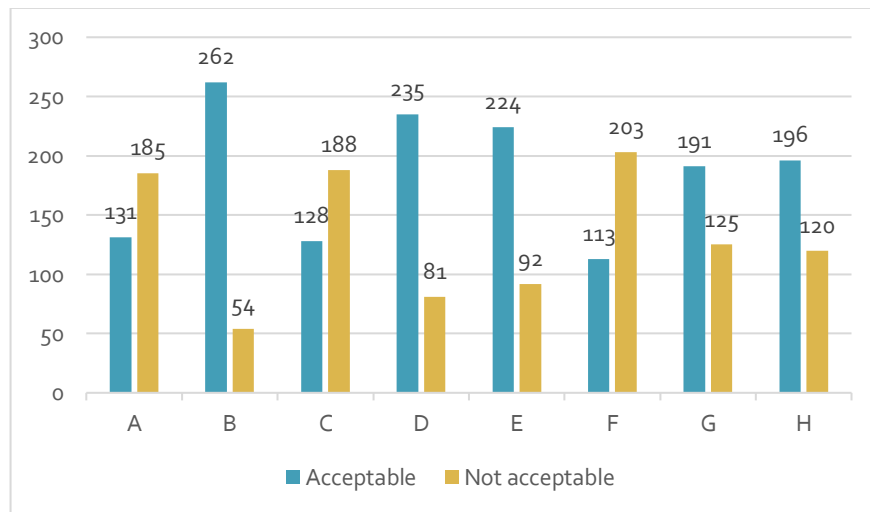


Figure 5-38: Responses to the question, 'Indicate which images are acceptable as a representation of a woman's head for a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.'

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

In conclusion, the questionnaire found that the majority of Saudi consumers prefer to shop for garments in stores, and primarily shop abroad, rather than in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, most of the respondents agreed that a digital fashion show is an appropriate means of replacing real models in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, and that such shows will improve the quality of in-store garment display, although the shows must include restrictions on the type of garments displayed. In terms of female representation in digital fashion shows, it was agreed that the facial features should be shown, the model's skin colour should not change, representing the model's hair would not be acceptable and headless models were not preferable.

## **5.6 Results of the Interviews with Fashion Designers**

Interviews were conducted with five fashion designers (Appendix C), including a casualwear and Ramadan dress designer, a bridal dress designer, and a designer of evening dresses and abayas. The survey consisted of nine questions under the following

five themes: influence of culture; the audience at fashion shows; the acceptability of female representation; the fashion industry; and the acceptability of digital fashion shows. The following sections present the findings of the research under each theme, employing the following terminology:

- DES1 refers to designer number 1;
- DES2 refers to designer number 2;
- DES3 refers to designer number 3;
- DES4 refers to designer number 4;
- DES5 refers to designer number 5.

Table 5-3: Fashion Designers Interviewees Group.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The interviewees and their positions	Organisation
Casual and Ramadan dresses designer	Bakkarat Store, Jeddah
Bridal dresses designer	Rana Riri Store, Jeddah
Evening dresses and abayas designer	Fiore Store, Jeddah
Bridal dresses designer	Raheed Store, Jeddah
Abayas designer	Abayat Juhayna Store, Jeddah

#### 5.6.1 Promoting Designs

Under this theme, the interviewees were asked the following open-ended question: ‘What method do you use to promote your designs?’ The findings revealed that the majority of the interviewees highlighted certain key methods that they use in promoting their designs, including using social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and WhatsApp; department stores or their own shop; public events; television; and online. However, most of the interviewees also included the category of ‘other’, as the main

method they employ to promote their designs. This category includes magazines, journals, exhibitions and bloggers.

Table 5-4: The usage of different platforms for promotion by the fashion designers interviewed.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

	Social media				Other methods of promotion					
	Facebook	Instagram	Snapchat	WhatsApp	Department stores	Own shop	Public events	Online	TV	Other
DES 1	✓	✓			✓			✓		✓
DES 2	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	
DES 3	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DES 4	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓
DES 5	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			

In the case of social media, all five interviewees (DES1, DES2, DES3, DES4, and DES5) (5/5) use social media for promotion. This result confirmed the findings of Hope (2016) in a report conducted by BBC News, which stated that higher levels of participation on social media tend to grow companies' online sales faster than those of their lesser-known competitors, thereby turning the traditional fashion hierarchy on its head. All five declared that they use Instagram and Facebook, while Snapchat (4/5) and WhatsApp (3/5) are less frequently used. This is because that Snapchat can keep snaps for only 24



hours and it will be deleted after that, which makes it difficult for the consumer to view the snaps unless the consumer is on Snapchat all time. In the case of WhatsApp, the fashion designer is limited to his/ her database as WhatsApp is linked with a phone number.

In this context, interviewee DES1 mentioned that a lack of experience in using social media, and perhaps a lack of confidence in the development of products through the media, reduces the number of designs promoted on social media, adding that she employs assistance in this field. She said: *"I use social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, but mostly Instagram. I have little experience in product advertisement myself. Sometimes, I go a full five months without posting any images on Instagram."*

Interviewees DES2 and DES5 also stated that they use Instagram for promoting their designs, because it is easy to use for communicating with customers.

Four of the interviewees (4/5) stated that they use Snapchat as a tool for showing their designs. DES4 stated: *"I am not against social media, and use it widely. Some of my pieces have been sold via Snapchat, where some of my followers saw models wearing my dresses and bought the pieces as a result of advertisements on social media."*

Meanwhile, interviewee DES2 mentioned using Snapchat alongside Instagram and WhatsApp as tools to promote her designs, replying to the question of whether she advertises using social media, *"Of course, through the means of social communication such as Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp."*

All of the respondents (5/5) confirmed that they use Facebook as a means of promoting their designs, but that they hire experienced people for the task. As interviewee DES1 explained, *"I hired two people who work in marketing. They proposed that they would take care of brand advertising and sending orders to shops, which was of great help at the time, although they subsequently quit."*

WhatsApp was another social media tool the interviewees reported using for advertising their designs, with three of them (3/5), citing the use of the app amongst other tools.

The other channels the interviewees mentioned for promoting designs were primarily department stores, with two of the participants (2/5) believing that this is a viable means of promoting their designs. DES1 explained that department stores and boutiques only display her designs, and do not buy them, adding, *“(the department store) acts as a mediator. When they sell any product, they receive a percentage of the profit from the sales and dispatch the products that have not sold.”*

Interviewee DES2 concurred with interviewee DES1 regarding the importance of department stores for displaying her designs and products, although this was not a priority for her, revealing that,

*“In collaboration with several other designers, we are potentially in the process of renting a space in the market for offering products, in the same way as Debenhams, combining more than one designer brand. But this not my priority. What's important to me is to present my collection in Saudi Arabia, especially Jeddah, and then in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.”*

Interviewee DES2 further explained that she employs banner stands at public events and takes advantage of any opportunities to advertise her products and store, while interviewee DES3 stated that one of the methods she uses to promote her designs is her shop.

Meanwhile, two participants (2/5) highlighted the use of online techniques as a means of displaying and selling their designs and products. Interviewee DES1 specified that she uses websites, such as ‘wesh albes’ to sell her products within the Gulf countries, although specialist websites for Arab designers are limited to marketing within the Arabian Gulf. In the same context, interviewee DES3 explained that the online methods offer advantages, particularly in terms of communication with customers: *“I am currently selling online, but because of the high price of any product, it is difficult to achieve sales. This does not prevent me selling some pieces to the Gulf countries via the customer communicating with me through the means of social media.”*

Furthermore, two of interviewees stated that they promote their designs via television interviews, in which the designer presents their designs, and discusses the raw materials used. Interviewee DES2 stated, *“in television interviews, I talk about my designs and the raw materials used in their manufacture,”* adding, *“Women are always keen to watch such TV programmes, and this generates curiosity to visit the designer and see their designs in reality.”*

Other methods for promoting their designs were also mentioned by four of the interviewees, including magazines, journals, ceremonial events, exhibitions and bloggers. One of the interviewees explained, *“Sometimes places such as banks organize events, where I am able to hang many banners or placards advertising my products.”*

Another interviewee mentioned the use of the exhibitions, together with the help of social media bloggers, to promote their collection, while interviewee DES1 named ‘Destination Jeddah magazine’ as a source for advertising her designs, explaining that

*“This magazine has published some of my collections. Although I did not personally approach them to interview me or to advertise my collection, I always hold an open day event for the release of the collection, inviting many people, including buyers and editors of magazines. When one is interested in the collection, they interview me and publish the interview in the next issue (of the magazine).”*

In contrast, another interviewee responded that advertising in magazines is not possible, refusing to provide any reasons for this, simply considering it to be a failed experience.

### 5.6.1.1 Pros and Cons of Methods Used in Promoting Designs

Under this theme, the respondents were asked an open-ended question with regard to their experience of the pros and cons of social media channels for promoting their designs. The majority of the participants highlighted the pros of using social media as being the fact that it is widespread (2/5), easy to use (2/5), and good for communication (2/5). Interviewee DES1 stated that *“an advantage of Facebook that helped me a lot in the beginning was the fact that it is widespread”*.

Interviewee DES2 explained in detail the pros of this form of technology, in terms of the speed of communication:

*“In social media, the pros are the speed of communicating with people once the images for an item of clothing have been uploaded, either through Snapchat or Instagram. You quickly find it displayed, and the interaction of the followers is revealed through their messages on my email, whether or not I know the person, which means I can start communicating with them about topics such as the location of the boutique. I have always felt that Snapchat is an active platform for me, probably more so than Instagram.”*

Meanwhile, interviewee DES1 explained that another pro is the easy use of social media, as it enables her to display her products without encountering any difficulties with the photographs, adding that Instagram is only useful to a certain point, as it only enables people to view pictures and to ‘Like’ them, which is prevalent among a large number of followers. Meanwhile, interviewee DES5 discussed the positive aspect of the ease of communication on Instagram.

In contrast, and in term of cons of using social media for promoting designs, two factors were cited, the first of which was imitation (2/5), and the second the large number of designers using the platforms (1/5). In relation to imitation, interviewee DES5 stated that ideas and designs posted on social media platforms are easily stolen, while interviewee DES2 mentioned that some of the followers on Snapchat copy the designs without permission, explaining, *“some of the followers on Snapchat are fashion designers who follow my process, my designs and the materials I use, and then, unfortunately, they copy my designs,”*. The same interviewee added:

*“I never mind that some of them take the idea of the designs, or are inspired by them, but to be imitated literally annoys me because every designer must make their own mark in terms of the way they express their ideas through their designs, which sets them apart from others. I surf many magazines and designers, such as Zuhair Murad, and follow perhaps one or two of them on Instagram, but I do not do so in order to copy their designs, only to be aware of my competition, and what is in vogue, and currently working in the fashion industry.”*

In relation to the large number of designers employing social media platforms to promote their designs, interviewee DES1 explained that this is a disadvantage when using Instagram, explaining *“because of the large number of designers who publish their collection through Instagram, consumers do not care enough to comment that they have noticed a particular design, they just continue browsing.”*

### 5.6.2 Censorship of Social Media

Under this theme, the researcher asked the interviewees the following open-ended question: ‘Is there any documented censorship or control of photographs of your products when they are displayed on Facebook and Instagram?’

The majority of the interviewees (4/5) confirmed that there is no control of their images on social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, although interviewee DES3 stated that, while there is no censorship of the images on social media, difficulties or lengthy procedures may be encountered when advertising on television, explaining, *“we have never had any problems with our advertisements within the scope of social media and our own stores. However, we did when we used street and television advertisements because it involves a very lengthy procedure.”*

In contrast, Ingram (2015) reported that while social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, facilitate the easy posting and distribution of photographs and movies, since censorship governs all corporations, content can quickly disappear. In some cases, it is not possible to ascertain why it was removed, or how to reclaim it.

In terms of conditions that may be applied to images posted on social media, interviewee DES3 stated that there is no censorship of the images, apart from the requirement that the mannequin is headless. Although there is no specific law providing for this, it is required by custom and tradition. This concurs with this finding of Sandikci and Rice (2011), and also with Arabia (2009), who stated that store mannequins in Saudi Arabia do not have heads, and some are also armless, commenting that, since the mannequins may be ordered headless or armless, perhaps a warehouse exists that is full of the missing appendages. Arabia (ibid.) also noted that there are many shops in Jeddah

selling women's evening gowns, which are usually only visited by women to give her more privacy and comfort to talk to saleswomen instead of salesman. These stores also have headless mannequins.

Interviewee DES3 discussed her experience of censorship, explaining that, despite her attempts to present her collection perfectly, she faced criticism from some of her followers, adding, *"I spent a lot of money on models and photographers. This provided a polish for my collection, and raised my popularity, increasing people's enthusiasm to search for certain products. Criticism is inevitable in the world of fashion design, so I got used to it."*

### 5.6.2.1 Control and Censorship of Magazines

In relation to the issue of the control and censorship of magazines, the interviewees were asked the following open-ended questions: 'How does censorship of images in magazines work? Is it governed by the magazine's owners, a specific authority, or designers?', and, 'Would this censorship affect design promotion? How do consumers differentiate between the censorship of the image in magazines and the real garments?'

The majority of the interviewees highlighted particular aspects that are controlled by the magazine, including the following:

- Asking for pictures;
- Image editing;
- Covering a certain part of the image;
- Acceptability.

Only one interviewee (DES2) stated that the editors of magazines accept all of the pictures, but might ask to withhold some, as they are unable to publish undisguised images. She explained, *"I therefore disguise the image by covering parts of the body in a certain way, with the editor's approval, prior to submitting it for publication. This is the prerogative of the designer, not the magazine."*

Four of interviewees (4/5) claimed that the editors of the magazines edit the images, although the designers were not aware of who had been responsible for doing so. Interviewee DES4 stated that even European fashion magazines are subject to editing either by cutting pages, or covered sections with black pen, as in a censored magazine. Interviewee DES2 further confirmed that there is control over images in magazines, which are naturally required to edit images. In contrast, interviewee DES3 believed that the censorship is governed by another party, claiming, *"I think they follow the orders of religious police, or are acting out of fear."*

Meanwhile, two designers (2/5) explained that covering a certain part of an image is a further form of control that is sometimes used. One interviewee added:

*"I think that people have become accustomed to finding some pictures partially covered when they surf magazines, probably believing that it is a designer's ploy to draw their attention. However, they would prefer it if the covered parts of the image were revealed so they can see how the design really looks."*

This relates to the aspect of acceptability, since if the magazine covers a certain part of an image, as interviewee DES4 explained, that design loses its attraction for customers. In contrast, interviewee DES2 stated that covering a certain part does not affect people, as they are used to this approach.

The second aspect of the question asked of the interviewees in this section concerned how consumers differentiate between the censored images in magazines and the real design. The majority of the interviewees (3/5) responded that the Saudi consumer is able to differentiate between the images. While interviewee DES1 agreed that the consumer is able to distinguish between the real and the censored designs, censored images can deflect the consumer's attention from the design, explaining,

*"Of course they are able to use their imagination to distinguish between the two, but while they might be aware that the design is actually shorter, or that the magazine has covered part of the model's body, they might be more drawn to the design without the image amendments."*

Interviewee DES4 held the same view, together with the concern that a covered image does not attract a customer's attention, explaining, *"The consumer can distinguish between a censored and a real item, but the designer is concerned with their first impression of the design, and people lose interest in a design when an image is covered."*

Another interviewee (DES5) added that the Saudi Arabian community is used to image modification, and that such modification has altered in recent years. Where previously images were shaded in black, improvements have been made, and they are now shaded using the same colour as the garment. However, interviewee DES2 claimed that this is only true *"to a certain extent"*, as it depends on the consumer culture, which means that some people cannot distinguish between the basic and modified design. She added that *"in the past, when black was used to modify images in magazines, the difference was even more noticeable. This modification affected the basic design."*

### 5.6.3 Fashion Shows

This theme was concerned with fashion shows. The researcher asked the interviewees open-ended questions encompassing the following: the conduct of fashion shows; the importance of fashion shows; the gender of the audience; the obstacles to fashion shows; and their satisfaction with current fashion shows.

#### 5.6.3.1 Conducting Fashion Shows

The open-ended questions posed to the interviewees under this theme were as follows: 'On average, how often do you hold fashion shows?', and, 'Are there any specific seasons for fashion shows in Saudi Arabia?'

In terms of the question related to the frequency that they held fashion shows, two of the interviewees (2/5) replied 'Annually', and another two (2/5) replied 'Seasonally'. Appendix L provides a screenshot of the analysis using Nvivo.

Interviewee DES3 stated, *"In Saudi Arabia, I hold an annual fashion show and I do not share this event with other designers. Attendance is through special invitation and it is usually held near the holy month of Ramadan."*



Similarly, interviewee DES1 replied that *“I hold one fashion show in (Maison Bo-M), and a store in Riyadh, which holds a fashion week displaying many products, including my collection.”*

Another two participants, interviewees DES2 and DES5, replied that they hold seasonal fashion shows. Interviewee DES2 stated, *“Often, fashion shows are held in Ramadan, where there are Ramadan markets.”* Meanwhile, DES5 provided a detailed response to the question, evaluating her long experience in the design field, as well as providing a comparison between fashion shows in Saudi Arabia and fashion shows in European countries, including details of how the climate affects the shows:

*“I hope to present two shows, but currently present only at exhibitions. When I was first invited to participate, I determined which seasonal collection to display, established a timeline for the event, and commenced preparation a long time in advance. If the season was to be winter, I designed winter-appropriate clothes that were not too heavy, and therefore are commensurate with the climate in the city of Jeddah, where I can sell them after the show. Designing clothes for a summer season does not pose any problems.”* (Interviewee DES5).

Only one interviewee (DES4) replied that she does not hold fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, rather exhibiting her designs at ‘seasonal markets’, and ‘bazaars’, adding, *“I do not hold fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, because of the lack of organization on the part of officials. In addition, the pieces on display may be damaged as a result of lack of attention to hygiene, or to the lack of a clear organizational system.”*

These findings concurred with those of Khan (2013), who stated that Saudi fashion designers showcase their latest collections at annual exhibitions and fashion shows lasting three-days. Furthermore, Eissa (2009) cited the existence of a show at the culmination of a competition among Saudi designers and that other fashion shows are held as part of charity activities, while yet others are approved under names such as ‘bazaars.’

### 5.6.3.2 The Importance of Fashion Shows

Under this theme, the researcher sought to explore the importance of fashion shows, posing the question, 'Are fashion shows important to your business?'

The majority of the interviewees (5/5) stated that fashion shows are important to their business, although interviewee DES1 replied that they are important, but not in Saudi Arabia, as she does not feel that Saudis are enthusiastic about such events, or that they are able to attend fashion shows. Meanwhile, interviewee DES2 replied that fashion shows are very important, explaining that they provide the designer with the opportunity to dazzle the audience, and to inspire them to purchase the items:

*"Of course, it is very important that a designer's followers are able to view the designer's latest designs and learn how they are implemented, how the raw materials are used and the extent of the progress achieved. Fashion shows dazzle their audience and motivates them to purchase. When you see ladies' designs worn and displayed by models, enthusiasm for the product is enhanced, the volume of purchases increases, and orders are placed. Thanks to these shows, designers achieve greater fame, and the female audience begins to follow them."* (Interviewee DES2)

Moreover, interviewee DES5 explained that fashion shows are important to their business as the beauty of the clothes is highlighted by the models who wear them and walk out into the audience, adding that this enables a buyer to understand how the clothes should be worn and how the shape appears on a body.

These findings agreed with those of Frankel (2012) and Skov et al. (2009), who indicated that some fashion designers use fashion shows to inspire the press and buyers, enabling them to envisage the mood of the forthcoming collection.

### 5.6.3.3 Gender of Audience

In this section, the researcher asked the following open-ended question regarding gender of the audience at fashion shows: 'Do you think that the growth of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia is dependent on having a single gender audience type (male/ female)? Why?'

The majority of the interviewees (2/5) replied 'No significant difference'. However, one interviewee (1/5) replied, 'male', while another (1/5) replied, 'female'. Interviewee DES5 opined that supporting men in attending fashion shows would increase purchasing from shops and consequently engender the growth of both businesses and the market, adding that the presence of men as buyers and media representatives increases product promotion and thus increases purchasing.

In contrast, interviewee DES2 replied that presence of women only at fashion shows is appropriate, but for businesses, there are benefits in the presence of businessmen as buyers, explaining:

*"I am satisfied with the presence of women only, but I also hope that the attendance of businessmen (buyers) will change their view regarding local designs, which will increase the motivation of consumers to buy from local designers, instead of international brands, since we as designers produce high quality products ... I have no problem with fashion shows being attended by a mixture of men and women, as men dominate the advertising and photography field."*

This finding agreed with that of Lewis (2013), who stated that fashion shows in Saudi Arabia are attended by a single gender, female-only, audience, due to religious, cultural, and governmental restrictions, which presents challenges for a male designer to observe the audience's reaction to their collection.

However, the majority of the interviewees replied that there would be 'No significant difference' for them in terms of the audience composition. Interviewee DES1 stated:

*"There will not be a significant difference in terms of the presence of men, frankly. It would be a good thing for men to attend because a large number of buyers are male, and also most of the people who work in the field, such as photographers, are male, so their presence would make the fashion show a real show. "*

In the same context, interviewee DES3 replied that it would be better for both genders to be present at fashion shows, since this will allow shop owners' buyers to purchase items from the collection following their presentation, which will encourage

national industries and reduce imports from various other countries, which will reduce the cost to the owner of the shop in terms of international shipping and transportation costs and licenses.

The same interviewee suggested holding a fashion show with barriers that women and men are able to attend, at which only modest clothing is presented, such as abayas, and where non-Saudi models also wear the hijab or a headscarf.

### 5.6.3.4 Obstacles to Fashion Shows

The open-ended question posed under this section asked, 'Are there any obstacles to holding fashion shows in Saudi Arabia?'

Most of the interviewees highlighted certain obstacles, including licenses (2/5), customs and traditions (2/5) and fear of the new (2/5) as barriers faced by fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. In relation to licenses, two of respondents, DES2 and DES3, held the same opinion that it is difficult to obtain licenses and that a lengthy procedure is involved in obtaining an authorization permit. One of the interviewees stated, *"Although we try to obtain permits, those for setting up fashion shows that include the term 'fashion show' are rejected, but although we face difficulties, we must try."*

Customs and traditions were considered by the interviewees to be among the barriers to holding fashion shows in Saudi Arabia and interviewee DES4 replied that *"It is not easy to change the attitudes of society regarding fashion exhibitions, as traditions control our life. You will need a very long time for change to occur."* This concurred with Lewis (2013), who noted that Islamic fashion shows face serious criticism from both the public and from religious zealots, since they often fail to meet the Islamic requirements, with designers creating tightly fitting clothing that displays the female figure. He added that new fashion designers with limited budgets face challenges in displaying their collection to the public.

However, interviewee DES1 held a different view, stating: *"Twenty years ago, fashion performances were staged in honour of the princess. So, in the past, there were shows,*

*but not now, although I have heard that some designers hold fashion shows, but I do not know how."*

An additional obstacle to holding fashion shows in Saudi Arabia was claimed by the interviewees to be the fear of the new, particularly in relation to certain elements of society. Interviewee DES5 stated that these people are naturally resistant to change in terms of any new improvements, adding, *"this must be changed as soon as possible so that we can advance faster than we are now."*

#### 5.6.3.5 Satisfaction with Current Fashion Shows in Saudi Arabia

The following open-ended question was posed to the interviewees in this section: 'Are you satisfied with the current fashion show practices in Saudi Arabia?'

The majority of the interviewees (3/5) stated that they are not satisfied with the current fashion show practices in Saudi Arabia. Interviewee DES1 mentioned the scarcity of existing fashion shows, while interviewee DES2 highlighted the state of the existing fashion shows in the country, arguing that the fashion industry is not limited to evening clothes.

*"I'm not satisfied with the degree of willingness to listen to what we say and are discussing. The fashion industry is not confined to evening clothes, but is a hugely productive industry, including uniforms for school, women's abayas and clothes for children. The needs of all members of Saudi society should be considered, since instead of resorting to imports, we could produce everything locally, all we need is help."* (Interviewee DES2).

Moreover, interviewee DES4 confirmed that the components necessary for succeeding at fashion shows are not currently available and that it is difficult to change anything because customs and traditions govern society. These results concurred with the findings of Lewis (2013), who argued that in Saudi Arabia, religious, cultural and governmental restrictions control fashion shows.

In contrast, two of interviewees (2/5) highlighted their satisfaction regarding current fashion show practices in Saudi Arabia, although interviewee DES5 was not entirely

satisfied, as she wished for an increase in the number of shows each year, as well as making them accessible for both genders, stating that she is *“a little bit satisfied, but I hope the number of fashion shows increase and that they are made available to both genders.”* Meanwhile, interviewee DES3 expressed her satisfaction with the current fashion show practices, stressing, *“People have to get used to the idea of fashion shows, in order to increase interest in the pieces on display at such shows, to increase production and to provide job opportunities.”*

### 5.6.4 Fashion Industry

Under this theme, the researcher asked questions concerning the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia and the degree of government support for fashion shows and the fashion industry as a whole.

#### 5.6.4.1 Description of Fashion Industry

The open-ended question posed to the interviewees in this section was as follows: ‘How would you describe the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia?’

The majority of the interviewees raised the following aspects of the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia: scarcity of creativity (1/5); not productive enough (2/5); high cost (1/5); reliant on foreign workers (2/5); and demand, to a certain extent (1/5).

Interviewee DES1 discussed the scarcity of creativity on the part of fashion designers, which consequently affects the growth of the fashion industry, explaining:

*“In my view, there are only a very few designers that we can call ‘fashion designers’, who are doing a fantastic job and are iconic. Unfortunately, the vast majority overestimate their work, which frustrates me, because the title ‘designer’ is applied to any person who creates or copies any design. I find that many of the young designers, most of whom are amateurs, rarely produce creative designs.”*

Meanwhile, interviewee DES3 explained that, to a certain extent, there is no significant demand for a fashion industry in Saudi Arabia, while two of interviewees described the fashion industry in the country as not being productive enough, as

interviewee DES2 stated, it *“is considered to be non-productive, despite our ability to develop ourselves, and to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of production.”*

Echoing the same view, interviewee DES5 said that she cannot describe the industry as growing rapidly, rather that its slow growth is due to the challenges fashion designers face in terms of live marketing, such as fashion shows.

Furthermore, interviewee DES2 added another factor, describing the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia as being high cost and reliant on foreign workers, explaining: *“we mainly rely on foreign workers and their designs, the prices of which are always exaggerated.”* This view was supported by interviewee DES4, who discussed the shortage of local workers and designers, stating, *“there are certain difficulties that we face in this sector, including the difficulty of obtaining labour within Saudi Arabia.”*

### 5.6.4.2 Fashion Shows and the Fashion Industry

The open-ended question posed to the interviewees in this section concerned whether a connection existed between the effectiveness of fashion shows and the fashion industry as a whole in Saudi Arabia. It asked, ‘Is there any relationship between fashion shows and the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia?’

Only interviewee DES1 (1/5) replied that there is ‘no influence’, and consequently no relationship between fashion shows and the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia, despite stating that there is a relationship between the two in other countries:

*“Of course there is a relationship, but not here in Saudi Arabia, where there is never a relationship, since few people consider fashion shows to be essential. I hold fashion shows on a small scale (in-store fashion show), and with each collection, I try to encourage the buyers to attend the live fashion show in order to experience it. Seeing the designs displayed by models provides an idea of how they should be worn to those visiting the store for the first time, so the designs can then be marketed and sold.”* (Interviewee DES1)

In contrast, three of interviewees (3/5) replied that there is a relationship and a shared influence between fashion shows and the wider fashion industry. Interviewee DES3 replied that *“presenting clothes in fashion shows enables the consumer to see the*

*pieces on show and they then order and buy the products, thus manufacturing increases for the company and revenues increase, which has a positive impact on the country's economy."*

In the same context, interviewee DES4 replied that there is a strong relationship between the two and a significant impact on the individual, on society, and on the country's economy, citing the benefit that influences that increase the local industry engender increased exports and subsequently increases to the country's economy.

Meanwhile, interviewee DES5 responded, *"Of course there is relationship"*, and that she is hoping to increase the availability of fashion shows for both genders in order to increase the dissemination of the products by shop owners, and thus the exposure of the products to a wider market.

### 5.6.4.3 Government Support

This theme was concerned with government support, and the researcher asked the following open-ended questions of the interviewees: 'Does the government support the fashion industry?'

The majority of the interviewees (3/5) stated that the government supports the fashion industry, but two interviewees (2/5) claimed that such support does not exist.

In case of the availability of government support, interviewee DES3 discussed the country's vision in encouraging the building of factories for the sector, citing its vision for 2030, which will transform the country's economy from total dependence on oil to a reliance on local products and manufacturing. In this regard another interviewee stated that the governmental support is very important, in terms of the support offered within the framework of the system known as 'Saudisation', which provides rewards for family businesses and small enterprises. A similar initiative in a British context was discussed by Nodder (2012), who cited a report produced by the British Fashion Council that called on the government to support the fashion industry in order for it to grow as a global force, explaining that this could be achieved by making resources available to grow the United Kingdom's (UK) manufacturing base and to promote British designers abroad.



Meanwhile, interviewee DES5 replied that the Saudi government offers limited support to the industry in the form of support for small entrepreneurs, or simple financial support for start-up projects.

In contrast, two of interviewees (DES1 and DES2) stated that there is no support available from the Saudi government, although interviewee DES2 added to her response of 'unfortunately no' that *"There is only the support of human resources for the employment of Saudis,"* desiring that the government provide more logistical support: *"There is no material support, but we do not want material support, we want logistical support, both that of investors and that of the government in supporting us with our projects."*

To conclude, fashion designers employ different platforms to promote their designs, preferring to use social media because of its easy use, facility to disseminate their designs widely and that fact that it provides an easy means of communicating with consumers.

There is no censorship of images on social media, unlike in stores and magazines where headless mannequins must be used, instead of full mannequins, and amended images employed in magazines, in which as little of the female body as possible is displayed.

Fashion shows are important for fashion designers to grow their business and to motivate consumers to purchase their garments. Mixed gender audience fashion shows would allow the media to advertise and male buyers to purchase the garments to sell in their stores. However, there are many obstacles to holding fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, such as obtaining permission to hold them, and obstacles related to tradition, customs, and fear of the new. Therefore, fashion designers are not satisfied with the current fashion industry practices in Saudi Arabia.

### 5.7 Results of Consumer Survey 2 (to Determine the Final Form of Female Representation)

This section reviews the results of Consumer Survey Two (112 responses). As was concluded from the data collected through the interviews and the questionnaire

discussed previously, an interest exists in digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. This questionnaire was therefore created in order to determine the final form of the model's representation for the digital fashion show. The participants were offered different examples of female representations, such as natural, blurred and wearing a full nude bodysuit, in order to ascertain and finalize the appearance of the model for a digital fashion show. The participants were Saudi consumers and the questionnaire was distributed via social media. It was designed in the following three main parts, with each part divided into two or three questions, requiring the participants to rank the images according to their preference:

Part 1: Chest and Neck;

Part 2: Arms;

Part 3: Legs.

### 5.7.1 Chest and Neck

#### 5.7.1.1 Narrow Neckline

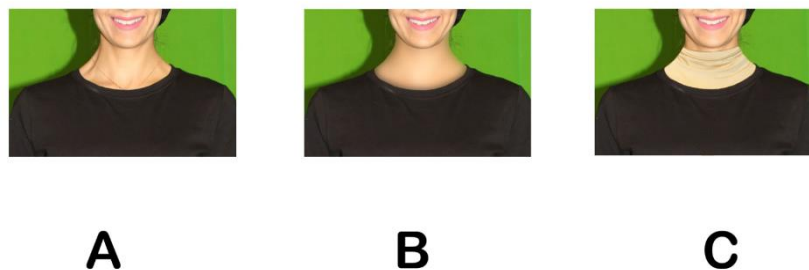


Figure 5-39: The range of neck and chest representations of a 'narrow neckline' for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

As presented in Figure 5-40, the results of this section regarding the choices presented in Figure 5-39 indicated that image C was the most preferred (72.32%), followed by image B (81%), then image A (50.89%).

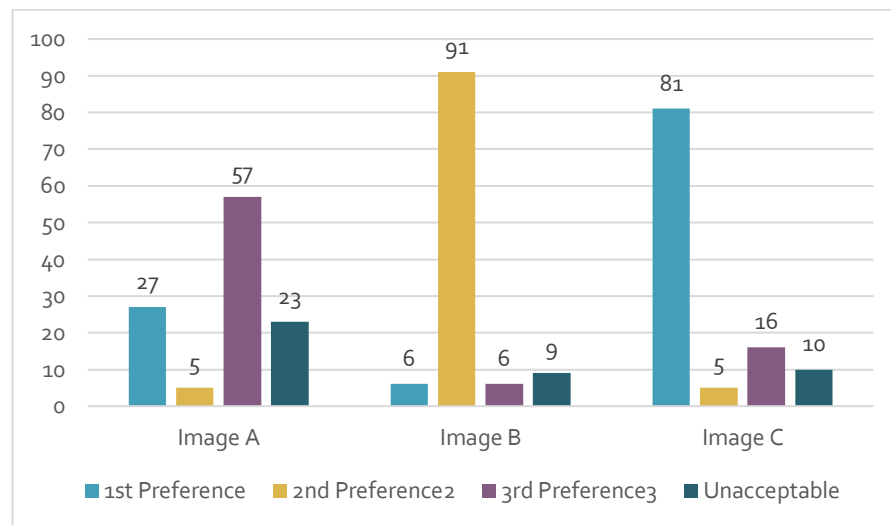


Figure 5-40: Chart describing the participants' responses to their preferred neck and chest 'narrow neckline' representation for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 5.7.1.2 Wide Neckline



Figure 5-41: The range of neck and chest 'wide neckline' representations for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

As Figure 5-42 illustrates, the results were similar for a wide neckline, indicating that image C was the most preferred choice (71.42%), followed by image B (75.89%), then image A (50.89%).

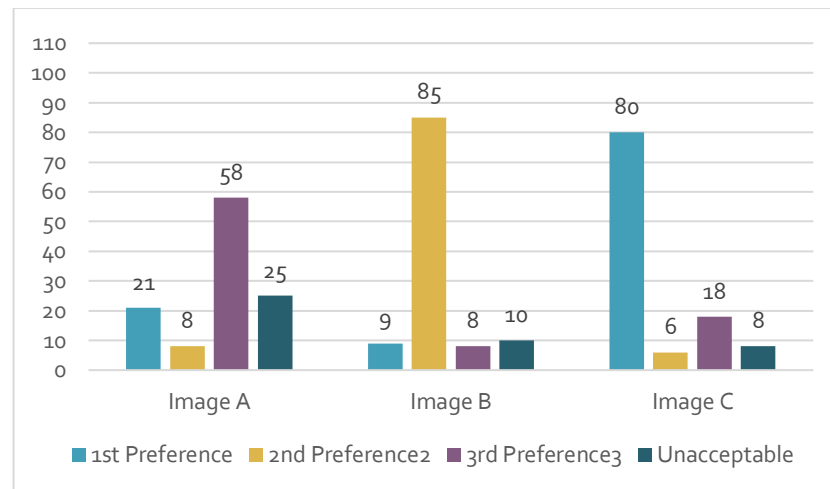


Figure 5-42: Chart describing the participants' respondents to their preferred neck and chest 'wide neckline' representation for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

## 5.7.2 Arms

### 5.7.2.1 Sleeveless

#### 5.7.2.2

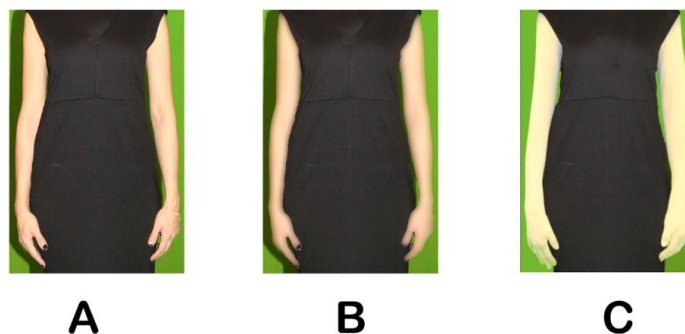


Figure 5-43: The range of representation of a 'sleeveless' arm for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

As Figure 5-44 illustrates, the results indicated that image C was the most preferred choice (62.29%), followed by image B (75.89%), then image A (50.89%).

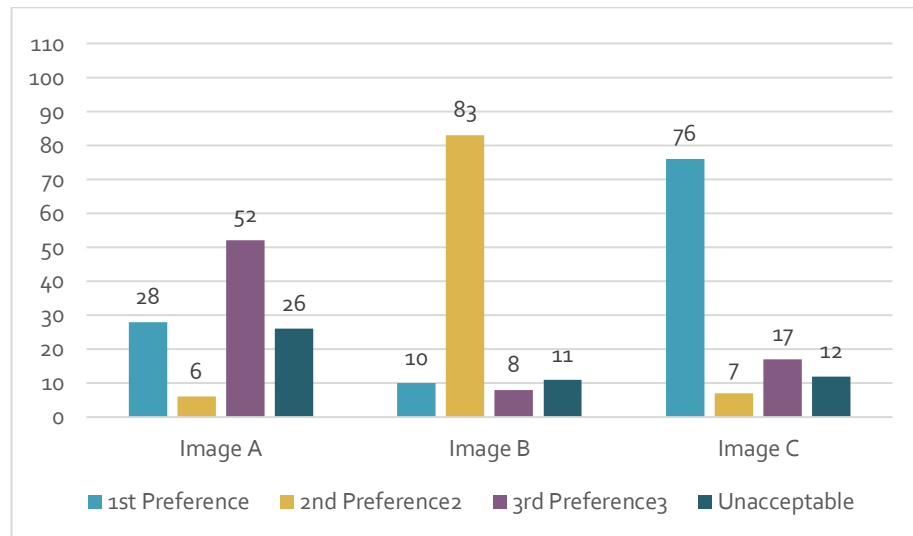


Figure 5-44: Chart describing the participants' responses to their preferred 'sleeveless' arm representation for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

### 5.7.2.3 Short Sleeves

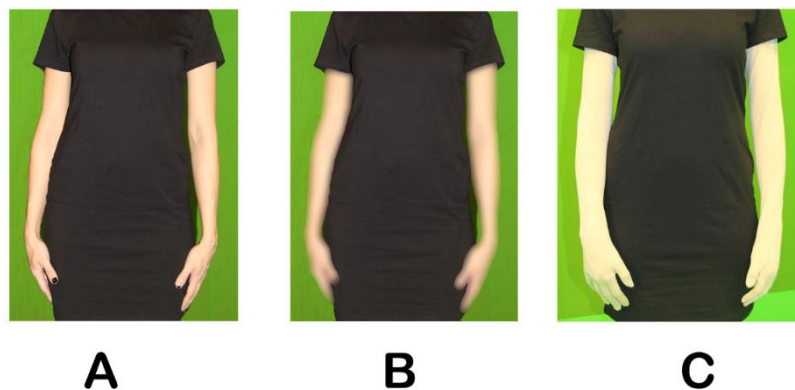


Figure 5-45: The range of representations of an arm wearing 'short sleeves' for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

As Figure 5-46 illustrates, the results indicated that image C was the most preferred choice (68.75%), followed by image B (74.10%), then image A (41.07%).

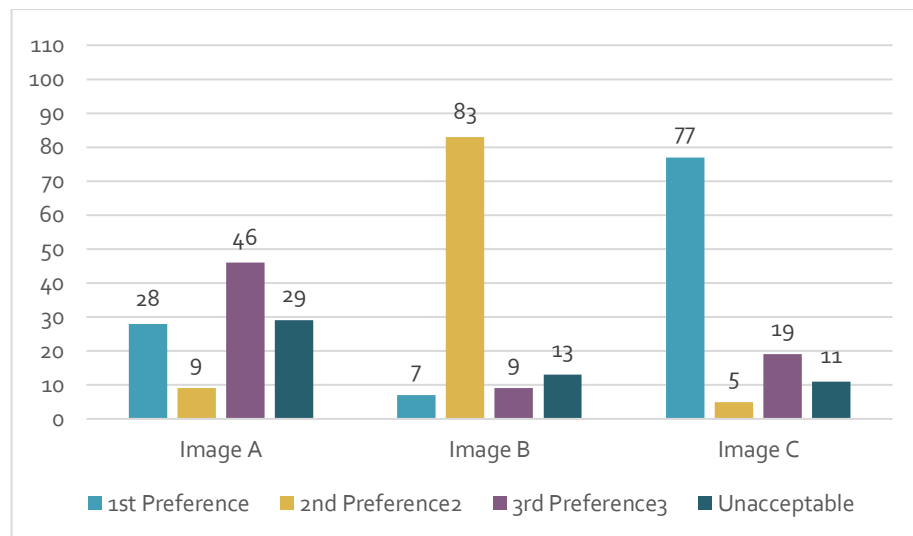


Figure 5-46: Chart describing the results of the participants' responses to their preferred representation of an arm wearing 'short sleeves' for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 5.7.2.4 Mid-Length Sleeve

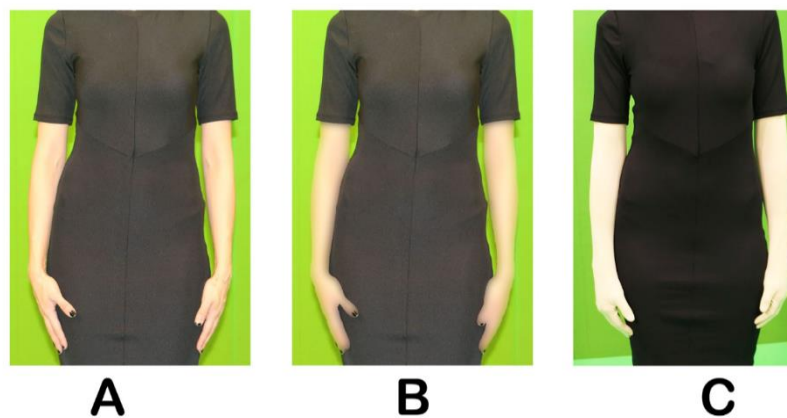


Figure 5-47: The range of representations of an arm wearing 'mid-length sleeves' for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

As illustrated in Figure 5-48, the results indicated that image C was the most preferred choice (68.75%), followed by image B (78.57%), then image A (45.53%).

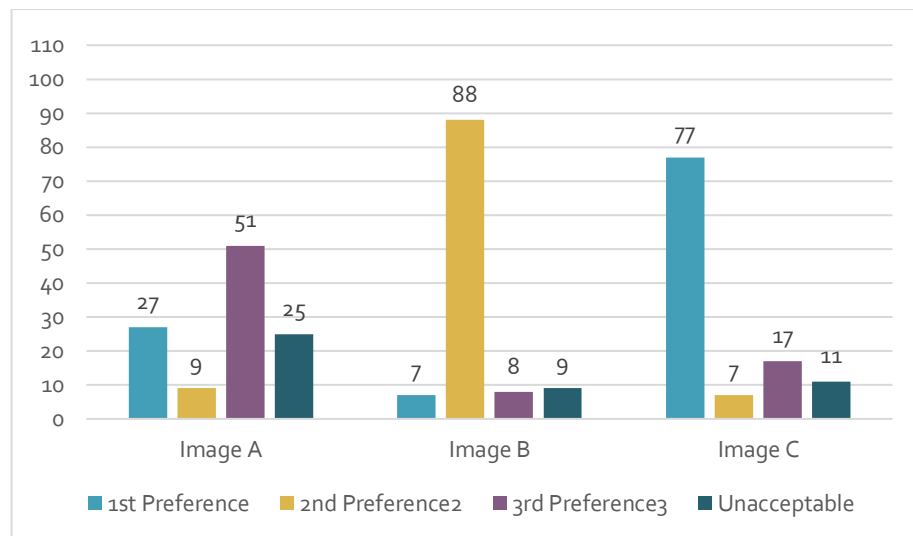


Figure 5-48: Chart describing the results of the participants' responses to their preferred representation of an arm wearing 'mid-length sleeves' for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The responses toward the questions related to arms are the same as most participants preferred the bodysuit, option C, over the natural skin and blurred (options A and B).

### 5.7.3 Legs

#### 5.7.3.1 Above Knee Length

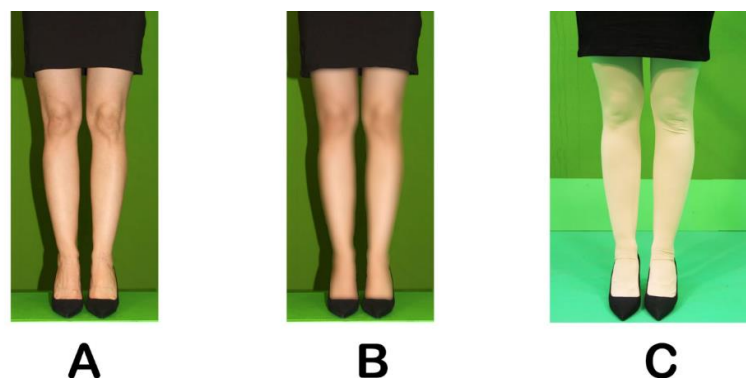


Figure 5-49: The range of representations of legs wearing an 'above knee length' skirt for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

As depicted in Figure 5-50, the results indicated that image C was the most preferred choice (73.21%), followed by image B (66.96%), then image A (36.60%).

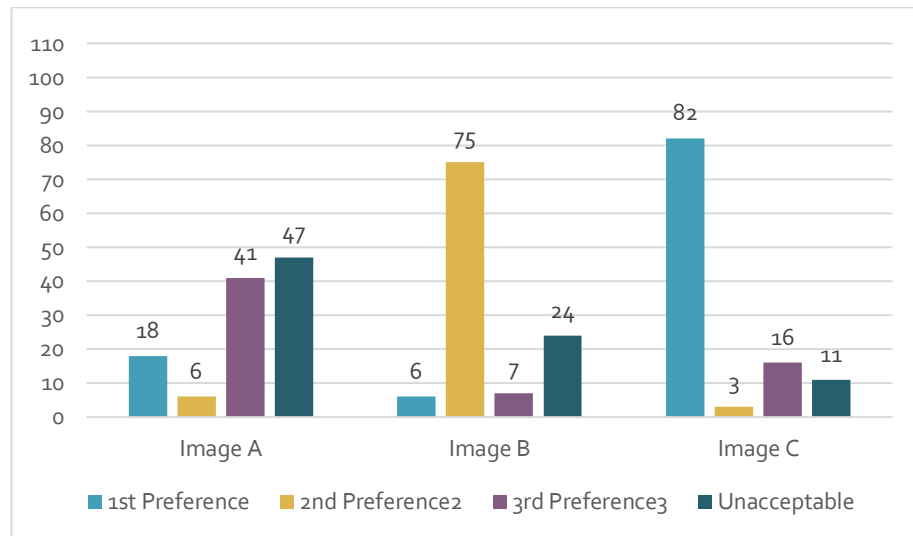


Figure 5-50: Chart describing the results of the participants' responses to their preferred representation of legs wearing an 'above knee length' skirt for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 5.7.3.2 Below Knee Length

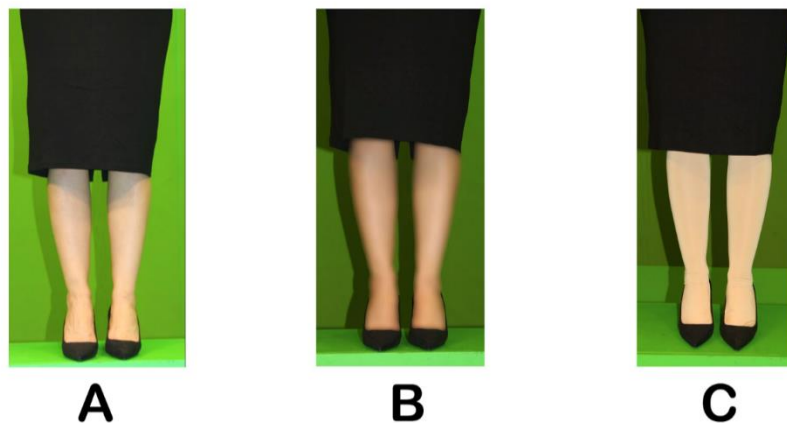


Figure 5-51: The range of representations of legs wearing a 'below knee length' skirt for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)



As depicted in Figure 5-52, the results indicated that image C was the most preferred choice (71.42%), followed by image B (75.89%), then image A (50.89%).

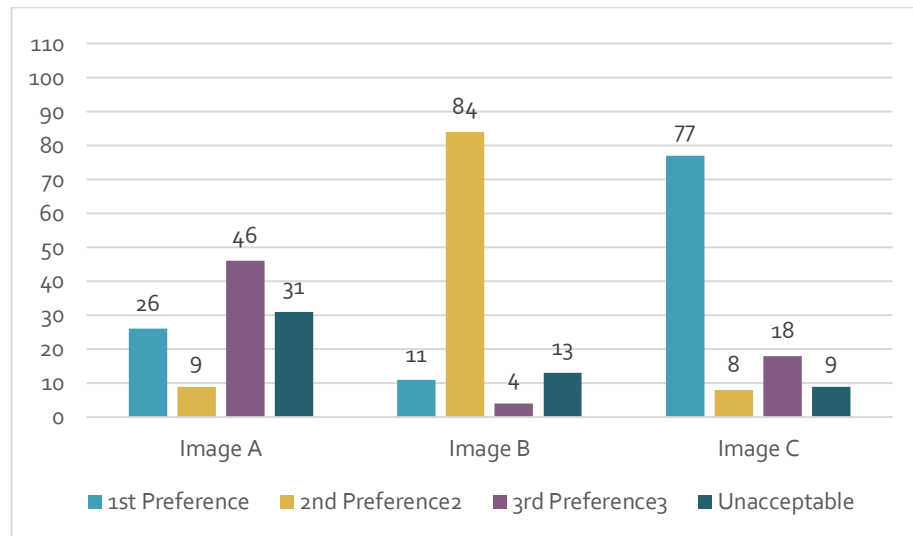


Figure 5-52: Results of the participants' responses to their preferred representation of legs wearing a 'below knee length' skirt for a woman in a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

To conclude, the participants' responses to Consumer Survey Two revealed that, for any length of garment, it is preferable for the model in a digital fashion show to also wear a bodysuit. Also, it shows that the respondents preferred the blurred body as a second option toward all images of different body parts in the questionnaire. Image A which shows a natural body has the most unacceptable or third preferred options.

## 5.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed the results of the qualitative and quantitative data, which was derived from observation, semi-structured interviews with members of the cultural leaders and fashion designers in Saudi Arabia, referencing it with the information obtained in the literature review. The use of more than one method of data collection provided in-depth information on matters related to the exploration of the acceptability of a digital fashion show as a suitable alternative to a traditional live fashion show, considering the cultural issues involved in Saudi Arabia.

The key findings were that the fashion industry is important, and the Saudi government should support it, and lend greater significance to the industry, which currently faces obstacles, such as in advertising, fashion shows and manufacture, that prevent the industry from growing.

The proposal for a digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia was found to be acceptable, although it should adhere to the Islamic rules in terms of female representation and the garments displayed. This is because of the influence of the Islamic religion within the country. However, if this acceptable female presentation had been used to present garments in a live fashion show, it would still not be acceptable as it is not acceptable religiously and culturally for a woman to walk in front of men in order to present garments.

Presenting a digital fashion show on television or on screen would not conflict with the Islamic rules. However, one CL did not accept displaying the fashion show in public and preferred it to be displayed through social media or websites for individual viewing.

Fashion designers were found to be employing social media as a means of presenting their garments, because no censorship control is involved in this medium, and it is easy to use.

Meanwhile, fashion shows were found to be important for fashion designers, as they assist in growing their business and the designers are not satisfied with the current fashion show practices in the country, as they would prefer that male buyers could attend the shows in order to advertise their products through different platforms.

In terms of the representation of the female in the context of a digital fashion show, it was found to be preferable to employ a silhouette to represent a garment, and while the model's facial features should be shown, their hair should be covered. Meanwhile, the model should appear decorous in the garments displayed, by wearing decent, loose garments that do not describe the body's features, and are not made from transparent fabric. It was also found that, in order to avoid representing the model's skin, a full bodysuit should be worn beneath the garments.

All of the data collected will assist in developing the framework, in order to create a digital fashion show that is acceptable in Saudi Arabia.



# Data Collection

## Discussion

## Chapter 6      Data Collection Discussion

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the outcomes of the primary data outlined in Chapter 5, including the interviews, questionnaires and observations. It relates the results from the primary data to those of the secondary data, in order to create the research framework discussed in the following chapter, i.e. Chapter 7.

### 6.2 Discussion

#### 6.2.1 Culture and Religion

The analysis of the interviews with cultural leaders (section 5.3) accords with Al-Rasheed's (2010) observation that religion has a significant influence on the culture of Saudi Arabia, including shaping the country's gender roles. In addition, as noted by Cassell and Blake (2012), Saudis tend to abide by the customs and traditions informing their daily behaviour, believing that a failure to do so goes against the state system. The data from the cultural leaders' interviews also suggests that religion and culture in Saudi Arabia supports the segregation of women, which is in line with the conclusion drawn by Tuyizere (2007), i.e. that religion and culture are inseparable and mutually influential concepts. However, the public press in Callaghan's (2019) article has notices that some Saudi women do not cover their hair and do not apply the Saudi Arabian dress code in certain places. Callaghan's (2019) article noted that some Saudi women tend not to wear their abaya when they travel abroad, but put it on once they land on their home soil while they are on a plane, with some also covering their face. A proportion of Saudis have now changed their attitude to the wearing of the Saudi Arabian dress code, viewing it as traditional behaviour rather than a religious requirement. This belief can create a new identity for this group, while Kelman (1997) viewed it as a system of belief that was being transferred between individuals.

#### 6.2.2 Modesty

Renard (2014) found that women in Saudi Arabia are required to dress modestly in front of non-relative men, with their clothing being designed to conceal their bodies

(2014). Harkness and Islam (2011) observe that Muslim women are prohibited from wearing anything that does not completely cover their bodies. Renard (2014) further noted that Islam is currently one of the largest growing global religions, resulting in Islam-related businesses acquiring a considerable share of the global market. One significant aspect of this segment concerns the attire worn by Muslim women, which has resulted in the development of a range of clothing focussed on the culture and preferences of Muslims. The religion stipulates minimum standards for personal modesty, reflected in distinctive styles of clothing based on different regions in Saudi Arabia, which, in some areas, garments worn to present modesty can be viewed as conservative or out-dated to other areas.

Renard's (2014) statement is very broad and does not specify the exact requirement of the female presentation in front of men. Therefore, this research has defined these particular religious requirements in which the female model can present garments in front of non-relative men. The rules of modest dressing in Islam do not restrict individuals to any specific colour, fabric or style, as can be seen in the wide range of clothing representing the diversity of the Muslim community. However, Muslim women are obligated to present in front of men with a decorous presentation. The data gathered by this current study indicates (section 5.3) that women of the Saudi community do not generally choose to wear very dark colours, preferring lighter shades, which they feel align with their easy-going nature. However, it was culturally common that women's abayas should be black, but this has changed recently as in many areas in Saudi Arabia women have the choice to choose the colour of the abaya. This finding contradicts that of Amrullah (2008), who stated that Muslims tend to choose to dress in conservative colours, i.e. black, grey, blue and white. However, such preferences may be due to the traditional clothing styles and colours of some regions of the Islamic world and which form regional differentiations and are thus part of a specific regional identity. This aligns with Kelman's (1997) description of national identity.

Islam has always been known for its appreciation of femininity and its recognition of the major role played by women in society. A significant aspect concerns how a woman chooses to dress, which forms the central aspect of this current research. Islamic women

are required to wear the 'hijab', which, according to Pharaon (2004), reflects the principle of modesty, and is designed to influence the behaviour of both females and males. One of the most notable forms of the hijab is the covering of the head practiced by the majority of Islamic women. Based on the result of the cultural leaders' interview (section 5.3.5), the hijab is a "complete covering of everything except the hands", to be worn in the presence of any man the woman could theoretically marry (i.e. one who is not an immediate family member). Thus, in line with previous discussions of this topic, the current study (sections 5.3.3 and 5.5.5) found that women are required to obey Islamic rules regarding how they should present themselves, i.e. that a woman's hair should be covered. Also, in the third consumer survey, it showed that consumers preferred a modest look in the digital fashion show, where they preferred the bodysuit over the blurred natural body and in their opinion it is not seen as sufficient to cover the awra, but a body stocking is needed to cover all the body except the face. This shows that the religion and tradition is embedded in the society.

This research undertook observations of print media, social media and physical clothing stores (section 5.4). The chief purpose of these observations was to determine the ways fashion is displayed, in order to assess both the differences and similarities between these three platforms. The researcher visited local and international stores in major shopping malls in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, observing that international brands are now widespread in Saudi Arabia, with a large number of brands being available in most shopping malls. However, a number of regulations have been introduced to regulate the advertising of products and the services offered in these stores. The observations revealed several notable aspects of Saudi fashion. Firstly, the researcher found no photographic imagery of women in the stores; secondly, most mannequins were headless, possibly in an attempt to blur the issue of gender; and thirdly, they were covered by clothing from the chest area to the knees. In addition, it was observed that, apart from specific departments (i.e. lingerie and beauty), most salespersons were male.

It was noticed that there are some differences between the printed magazines and the online version of it in terms of the female presentation. All dresses which show the body in printed magazines are digitally modified using different methods. These

modifications include changes in the garments, where they edit the garments to be shown longer and sometimes create sleeves for the sleeveless garments to look more modest.

### 6.2.3 Fashion Industry

It is evident that the contemporary fashion industry plays a considerable role in society, including as a means of expression and a self-identity. The findings of the consumer survey 1 (section 5.5.2) suggest that the majority of consumers in Saudi Arabia still prefer to purchase from physical stores. This confirms the conclusion of Torres (2016), who compared consumer behaviour in physical and online stores, identifying considerably more significant benefits to purchasing goods directly from physical stores. However, it was noted that some consumers prefer purchasing products and services from online stores or social media platforms, i.e. Facebook and Instagram. Shopping online has many benefits (i.e. a greater range and availability of different sizes), although static online images may not give a clear idea of the nature of the fabric (i.e. how light or heavy it might be). This reflects the views of Andzulis, Panagopoulos and Rapp (2012), who noted that social media is employed by the fashion industry as a promotional strategy, focussed on interacting with online customers, thus stimulating brand passion and customer loyalty. Berthon et al. (2012) also pointed out that the organisation of social network communities and forums tends to stimulate communication between brands and their consumers.

One notable finding of this current research (section 5.5.2) is that the majority of the participants indicated that they preferred to shop abroad rather than in local stores, either by means of the Internet, or through visiting physical clothing stores while travelling. This finding concurs with those of Kitching (2015), who identified a number of aspects limiting consumers from shopping in local stores in Saudi Arabia, in his view the most crucial being the representation of clothing within the local market. Females in Saudi Arabia face an issue in buying garments, as there are no fitting rooms in stores or even in the mall itself. Therefore, females have to buy clothes and try them on privately



at home, and then return back to the shop to return unwanted pieces, which consumes time and efforts.

This preference to buy abroad may arise from the internationalisation of the fashion market, with consumers seeing clothes on television and on the Internet, prompting them to wish to buy styles new to the market, in order to mimic the clothing worn by social media influencers. Although some of these garments do not show any modesty, women in Saudi Arabia wear these garments in women-only gatherings and when they leave home they wear abaya on top of it, therefore no men can see it. Sometimes these non-modest garments can be altered and styled to be modest enough to be worn in front of men such as while travelling abroad, where some women do not wear any abaya but still look modest.

As with previous studies, this current research has highlighted the significant contribution of the fashion industry to economic growth. The majority of the participants during the data collection (sections 5.3.4 and 5.6.4) agreed with the importance of the fashion industry and the need for additional support and acknowledgement from the Saudi government. However, this study also identified several barriers to the growth of the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia (section 5.6), including the lack of fashion designers, manufacturers, advertising and fashion shows. This has resulted in the Saudi fashion industry lagging behind the global fashion industry and consumers seeking products elsewhere. This highlights the importance of the Saudi market developing and creating opportunities for local designers to grow, thus reflecting positively on the country's economy.

Moreover, the findings of this current research also highlighted some of the unique characteristics of the Saudi fashion industry, including: (1) a dependency on foreign workers; (2) high cost; and (3) a lack of creativity as original designs are being replicated by others (section 5.6.4.1). Nevertheless, there has recently been a significant increase in government support for the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia, as reflected in the outcomes of the fashion designers' interviews (section 5.6.4.3).

Fashion shows are currently widespread throughout the world and are highly significant for both designers and the clothing sector. The presentation of a collection in a fashion show varies between designers and, although incurring relatively high cost, can be seen as vital for fashion designers, due to: (1) attracting buyers looking for items to sell in their stores and (2) the attendance of the press to advertise the collection either in printed media (i.e. magazines) or on television (Frankel, 2007). Live fashion shows create a link between the fashion designer and consumers (Natanya, 2017), while also enabling the fashion designer to observe the impact of the presentation of his/her the garments and estimate consumer taste. In addition, the presence of the press at fashion shows acts to improve the public exposure of both the fashion designer and the collection, thus increasing sales to the consumer. This also contributes to the country's economy. The absence of such fashion shows can therefore be seen as having a negative impact on Saudi designers, including limiting sales and consequently the annual income of the fashion industry, leading to a dependency on costly imported garments.

#### **6.2.4 Promotion**

Promotion by means of print media remains common in Saudi Arabia. However, the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs (2004) has issued in 2002 specific rules and regulations governing female representation in the media, including images being modified to cover female bodies from chest to knee. Stowasser (1994) noted that, according to the Quran, the hijab is meant to cover the head and the body from the throat to the ankle. However, this rule cannot be applied to websites and social media, on which the images of females are posted by the social account owner, as it is difficult to control images on social media. However, the Saudi government is able to restrict the access on specific websites if it has been found that this website presents inappropriate content. Based on the results of fashion designers' interviews (section 5.6.1), social media endows a designer with greater freedom in the display of his/her products to consumers, particularly due to the lack of any government rules covering the advertising of fashion by means of social media. This enables fashion designers to connect consumers to their favourite brands in a number of different ways. These findings are in line with those of

Hanna et al. (2011), who noted social media's significant facilitation of communication. Kietzmann et al. (2011) also commented that social media forms a strong interactive medium that allows fashion brands to obtain feedback from their consumers. Social media plays a critical role in establishing brand awareness among customers, including allowing different brands to advertise their products and services across the globe.

The Internet has modified the presentation of fashion, which now goes beyond a change of seasons or collection. This has altered the traditional system through which the industry had operated over a number of decades. Technology omits a number of previously relevant elements, i.e. fashion critics (who predicted or killed trends) and buyers for departmental stores. Social media influencers can form consumers' taste in fashion, by creating a strong bond with their followers and thus trust in their opinion of any product. This ensures that any brand name promoted by such influencers remains in the minds of followers, resulting in brands now choosing to co-operate with these influencers as a means of promoting their products

However, as noted by Qualman (2010), this is not the same in Saudi Arabia, due to the Saudi fashion industry lagging behind the industry in the West. This includes: (1) the arrival of social networks taking place much later for Saudis than the inhabitants of other developed countries and (2) Saudis lacking their own branding development strategies and marketing in the fashion industry, forcing specialists to adapt Western marketing strategies to the Saudi market. This lagging behind of Saudi fashion marketing is due to several factors, including: (1) a low awareness of fashion; (2) the relatively recent emergence of fashion as an industry; (3) a lack of effective local marketing campaigns; (4) an unwillingness to enter into communication with brands; and (5) a lack of competent specialists (section 5.6).

Kim and Ko (2012) noted that the main step towards improving the quality and effectiveness of the fashion industry depends on competent training of personnel, in order to create specialists in the fields of marketing and mass communication. This highlights the importance of using social media to market brands, as well as increasing brand income and the number of loyal customers. In order to find the appropriate

solution, it is necessary to take existing problems into account, as well as promote understanding of the importance of social media and marketing research in reaching a new level of branding development within the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia. In addition, in order for the Saudi fashion industry to grow, it will be important for these local brands to compete with international brands.

In order to enrich the findings of this current study, the researcher undertook a number of interviews with fashion designers (section 5.6). The results demonstrate that the majority employed the following methods to promote their products to their target market: (1) social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp); (2) department stores or their own shop; (3) public events; (4) television; and (5) online platforms (section 5.6.1 and Table 5-4).

One of the reasons for using social media in promotion is that, as noted above, it does not subject fashion designers in Saudi Arabia to any rules relating to the presentation of clothing, which give the designer the freedom to present their collections without any censorship (section 5.6.2). Therefore, fashion designers are choosing their own direction in displaying their collection in different ways, using models' mannequins or any other method or idea. This helps to reach wider range of consumers with different tastes.

Furthermore, it promotes a different level of acceptability on television or a computer screen, allowing women to present any type of garments the viewer chooses to see in the content of the social media page or television channel (section 5.3.3). This differs from the use of physical women as models, when it is only acceptable to present modest garments as the model is physically presented in the scene and the viewers are not able to not to see it (section 5.3.3).

Fashion designers in their interviews (section 5.6) indicated that social media is employed extensively by fashion designers in Saudi Arabia to promote their products and services and identified both the resulting benefits and disadvantages, as discussed below.

- The benefits of social media

In Saudi Arabia, social media is widespread and simple to use, while at the same time promoting efficient communication. This finding is consistent with the conclusion of Kim and Ko (2010) that social media marketing has one of the most significant impacts on business. Social media marketing can assist with: (1) brand building; (2) relationship building; (3) promotion; and (4) publicity. This results in the creation of opportunities for small businesses, entrepreneurs, medium size corporations and large organisations to create and develop their businesses and brands (section 3.7). Mohr (2013) suggested that the new media (i.e. social networking) can offer free promotional tools (i.e. Facebook and Twitter) to market businesses, so connecting them with potential customers. However, businesses need to remain mindful of how to appropriately tie these processes together, in order to maintain their reputation.

- The disadvantages of social networking sites

The participants of this study stated that a significant drawback of advertising products through social media is the potential for imitation, as ideas and designs posted on social media platforms can be easily stolen. Gökarıkse and Secor (2009) noted that, although social networking can help create success, this two-way exchange requires dedication and commitment. It is therefore important to note that the nature of marketing varies between social networks and the significance of setting up long-standing relationships capable of increasing both sales and revenue. Firms should therefore appoint a member of staff specifically tasked with observing each network, including answering comments, responding to queries and posting relevant information on products. It is difficult for any business lacking such a service to successfully handle social networks within the market, particularly as members of social networks can find advertising and marketing invasive. The common practice of developing campaigns using the details of members of social networking websites has led to a considerable number of disagreements concerning privacy in relation to advertising and promotion, which can lead to negative responses from customers. Furthermore, there remains a lack of any control over the images displayed on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, i.e. such images cannot be censored by the Saudi government.

Digital fashion shows have recently attracted significant attention (Marshall et al., 2010). The findings of this current study suggest that, in Saudi Arabia, a digital fashion show has the ability to create a feasible alternative to traditional fashion shows (section 5.5.4). However, the research also established that the presentation of the models influences the acceptability of a fashion show, or restricts how clothes are displayed (section 5.5.4). Items viewed on social media can, unlike in physical stores, be considered to constitute a personal choice (section 5.4 and section 5.6.2). This research accords with the findings of Charlton (2013) and Taft (2015) that digital fashion shows are more likely to enhance the quality of in-store clothing displays (section 5.5.2) as long as they are aligned with the religion and culture in terms of female presentation and displayed garments. Charlton (2013) and Taft (2015) also concluded that interactive digital technology enhances customer engagement. The presentation of the female body within digital fashion shows is also of prime concern, with this current study confirming that any exposure of models' hair or bodies remains unacceptable in Saudi Arabia (sections 5.3.3, 5.3.5 and 5.5.5). Based on the results it shows that the idea of having a digital form of fashion show is acceptable in Saudi Arabia, but it should obey to the Islamic rules in terms of female presentation. Caution will be needed for how and where it is shown, if in public rather than on social media. This will help the fashion promotion and distribution in the Saudi fashion industry.

In terms of developing the digital fashion show forming the subject of this research, interviews and questionnaires were undertaken to identify the final form of the model's appearance. The outcomes of both the survey (sections 5.5.5 and 5.7) and the interviews with fashion designers (section 5.6) clearly reflected the interest shown in digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia by the general public, the government and designers. The findings of this study revealed that it is preferable to cover the model's hair but not her face (section 5.5.5), as this meets the rules set down by the Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs (2004). The responses also revealed the bodysuit (which covers the entire body, including throat, chest and arms) to be an acceptable garment, while short dresses were viewed as being unacceptable.

### 6.2.5 Fashion Shows

There has recently been a significant growth in the Saudi Arabian fashion industry, with fashion shows becoming increasingly prominent in both the Middle East and Saudi Arabia. The organisers of Saudi fashion shows (fashion designers themselves in Saudi Arabia) have, as confirmed by the findings of this current study, been subject to a considerable degree of criticism from both religious scholars and the general population (section 5.6.3.4). The survey (section 5.5.3) results revealed that the majority of Saudis had not recently attended any fashion show within Saudi Arabia. This is highlighted by Trenwith's (2015) report that fashion shows were banned in Saudi Arabia by the Saudi Council of Chambers, due to the conservative mind-set of the country, as well as the rules governing the appearance of individuals, in particular females. However, recently Arab fashion week took place in Riyadh in 2018, also some rules have been applied in which men were not allowed to attend the fashion show (section 2.2.1.2). This indicates that Saudi Arabia has changed some rules to help fashion designers to promote their designs, but still these rules do not help the Saudi fashion designers in terms of publicity as press people were not allowed to take pictures in the fashion show. However, some images have been posted in different personal accounts on Instagram and in online websites and also on the official Instagram account of the Arab fashion council who organised the Arab fashion week.

This study found that, unlike Western countries, the citizens of Saudi Arabia do not readily accept mixed gender attendance at physical fashion shows (section 5.3.2). This finding was consistent with that of Nassif and Gunter (2008), who noted that Islam exerts a significant influence on all business operations in Saudi Arabia, including the lack of any encouragement for mixed gatherings. Stowasser (1994) highlighted the case of the Second Islamic Clothing, Fashion, Apparel and Accessories Fair, which was held in Istanbul in 2010. The organisers and designers strove to present Islamic fashion trends to satisfy the Islamic market and the demand for fashionable clothing. However, such fashion shows have met with criticism, including citing the requirement for women to protect their morality from Western or capitalistic corruption.

The opponents of fashion shows argue that their presentation of clothing fails to reflect Quranic teachings, catering instead for Western requirements. Western fashion shows do not obey Islamic rules, as they are presenting female models without covering their bodies and hair. Hence, despite the widespread availability of long dresses that meet Islamic requirements, Western fashion shows fail to apply the fundamental traditions of Islam.

The findings of the current research identified that fashion shows are organised by designers on an annual or seasonal basis (section 5.6.3.1). These findings corresponded with those of Khan (2013), who stated that Saudi fashion designers exhibit their latest collections at annual exhibitions and fashion shows that take place over three days. These fashion shows are held as part of charitable events or 'bazaars'. The findings of the current study highlighted that fashion shows are of immense significance to business, particularly when it comes to profitability (section 5.6.3.2). The research also identified several obstacles to the organisation of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia (section 5.6.3.4), including the ability to obtain a license and the need to conform to customs and traditions. These research findings concur with those of Lewis (2013), who noted that Islamic fashion shows tend to face serious criticism from both the general public and religious zealots, frequently due to a failure to meet Islamic requirements. It was also found that the frequency of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia is insufficient for the needs of fashion designers, since they are given fewer opportunities to display their clothes.

These obstacles can prompt fashion designers to hold private fashion shows, known as 'underground fashion shows', which are not advertised, attendance being by invitation only. This careful selection of attendees gives the designer the freedom to present his/her collection without constraints. This development has been made in response to the limitations resulting from the use of female models. In June 2018, Saudi Arabia broke all internationally recognised norms in fashion shows when female models were supplanted by the use of drones to display the garments. This resulted in a negative reaction, with the show being compared to an apparition (Cliff, 2018). This confirmed the findings of the primary research of this current study (section 5.2.1.4) that Saudis do not wish to see



a floating dress as the means of presenting a garment in a fashion show, preferring instead the use of a physical model.

A key finding of this current research is that digital fashion shows may prove an effective alternative in Saudi Arabia to conventional fashion shows, due to being more compatible with Islamic rules, though only if the model is presented with a modest look and covered her body with a bodysuit and also covered her hair. The influence of Islam on Saudi Arabian culture has had a considerable impact on both gender roles and the representation of females in public. Nevertheless, the findings of this current study indicate that Saudis have embraced the concept of the fashion show, leading to the potential for digital fashion shows to become a viable alternative to conventional shows.

### **6.3 Conclusion**


This research has identified some religious and cultural requirements to be able to present women's garments in a digital form of a fashion show using the power of technology. This information will be used to create the proposed framework which will be explained in the next chapter.

This study has established that the Islamic religion exerts a strong influence on the culture of Saudi Arabia and has also shaped its gender roles. Customs and tradition inform the behaviour of Saudis. The lack of support for mixed gender gatherings in the Islamic religion has led to fashion shows (particularly those with a mixed gender audience) being unacceptable in Saudi Arabia, despite the rapid growth of the industry in the Kingdom. In addition, the impact of Islam on the culture of Saudi Arabia has resulted in the control of the public presentation of women. Saudi women are required to appear modest in their clothing and not show their bodies, although this does not place restrictions on the wearing of any specific colours, fabrics or styles.

The various platforms available tend to use different forms of female presentation, with some being subject strict censorship, i.e. printed magazines and physical stores. However, others (i.e. social media sites such as Instagram) have no restrictions, thus enabling fashion designers to display their garment freely.

It can thus be concluded that digital fashion shows can, under specific conditions, prove an effective alternative in Saudi Arabia to traditional fashion shows, i.e. the need for the model to obey Islamic rules of presentation for the show to be displayed in public and on different platforms. This includes the covering of the model's hair and the body and a bodysuit to cover her throat, chest and arms. In addition, garments are required to obey specific rules, i.e. that garments should be modest and that no short dresses should be displayed.

Fashion designers will benefit from this digital fashion show by the ability to present their collection in an effective manner, as a result of this visualisation being suitable for different platforms, i.e. the Internet (including social media and websites) and screens set up in different places and for different occasions. Furthermore, a digital fashion show can give detailed images of the pieces displayed, thus promoting consumer interest in buying these garments and facilitating the financial growth of the local fashion designer market. Finally, this will enable fashion designers to reach consumers from different markets, rather than being limited to only a single market.



# Framework and Guideline Development and Implementation

## Chapter 7 Framework and Guideline Development and Implementation

### 7.1 Overview

The framework forms a description of the design process developed and adopted for the research, in order to meet the research objectives and achieve the research outcomes by answering the research questions. It seeks to identify the necessary elements to create a conceptual framework recognizing the acceptance of replacing live fashion shows in Saudi Arabia with digital fashion shows. Thus, the framework illustrates the relationship between the presentation of models in Saudi Arabia and the acceptance of this presentation in digital fashion shows.

This current chapter examines the findings from the literature review and data collection, including interviews, observation and questionnaires (see chapters 2 and 5). These are triangulated to shape the development of the framework, in order to develop guidelines for a digital fashion show appropriate for fashion designers in Saudi Arabia in 2019.

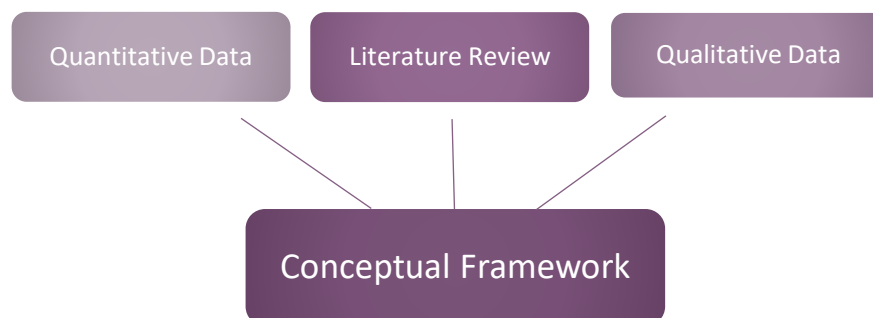


Figure 7-1: Data collection triangulation to develop the conceptual framework.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

This chapter introduces a new conceptual framework applicable in a specific location and time, to assist designers in creating a digital fashion show that conforms to the environment of the presentation. Each stage and procedure is therefore clearly explained and described. The digital fashion show seeks a solution to the need to replace live fashion shows in Saudi Arabia with ones that align with government restrictions, as well as conforming to the country's culture, traditions and technological limitations.

This chapter includes a detailed description of the conceptual framework used in this research.

## **7.2 Framework Development Process**

Based on the outcomes of chapter 5 and 6, the framework was founded on three main factors essential for the acceptance of any new idea raised in Saudi society, i.e. religion, culture and technology. These factors are:

- The religious aspect: to conform to Islamic rules in terms of female presentation.
- The cultural aspect: Saudi Arabia has a strong bond with both its culture and tradition. Therefore, it is important to establish how to connect these aspects and find an acceptable method of presenting garments in Saudi Arabia.
- The technological aspect: to find a simple and affordable method of presenting a collection.

The idea of applying a digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia and whether it would be accepted or rejected is influenced by these three factors. They will be discussed in sections 7.3.1.1, 7.3.1.2, 7.3.1.4

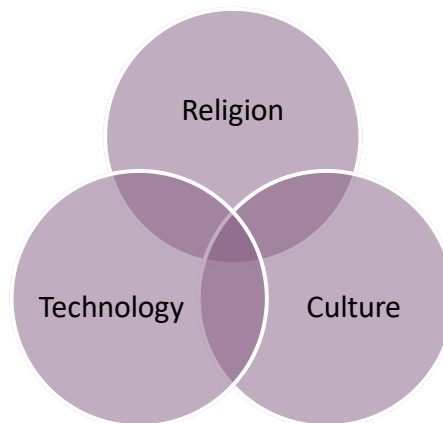


Figure 7-2: Main factors influencing the framework.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

It is highly relevant to explain the importance of these three aspects in relation to the Saudi context. In Saudi Arabia there is a strong bond between religion and culture. Sometimes it is difficult to differentiate between them as the culture is based on the religion. Most of these rules are not written down but they are general expectations known by living in the country and understanding the Saudi Arabian lifestyle. These generally understood customs and norms of behaviour whilst understood in Saudi Arabia the lack of written documentation means that it has been difficult to obtain quality academic sources on which to base the research. This makes it difficult to determine the acceptable female presentation without exploring it through stakeholders and consumers' opinion. There are no clear written rules regarding the female presentation in advertisements. A key finding for the cultural acceptability of a digital fashion show was that it should obey the Islamic rules in terms of female presentation, which means to cover her body, not to wear what shows her figure and to cover her hair.

In terms of technology, the usage of the Internet and social media is growing in Saudi Arabia, due to the widespread use of smart phones and electronic devices that have facilitated surfing the Internet. Also, the accessibility and availability of information have challenged and are still challenging the traditions by influencing the society with different global ideas. Also, social media has less restriction than physical life in terms of female presentations as it is acceptable for the female to be presented in any type of garment without any restrictions and with uncovered hair via a screen. On the other hand, the same female cannot present the same garments in the physical world. There are some limitations based on different aspects such as cost and ease of use: these aspects will be discussed later in section 7.3.1.4.

The literature review established a lack of information concerning fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. These have been banned by the Saudi government, due to their presentation of a woman which is showing her body figure and wearing what does not cover her whole body (Trenwith's, 2015), despite such events consisting of a woman modelling in a female-only environment (Section 6.2.5). Designers therefore require an

alternative means of presenting their collections to promote their designs and thus increase the purchase rate and increase their income.

The diagram below illustrates the framework of research undertaken to produce a digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia. This diagram is a model for the conceptual framework, which has the research methods in this study applied as an example and can be changed based on the time and place in which it is applied.

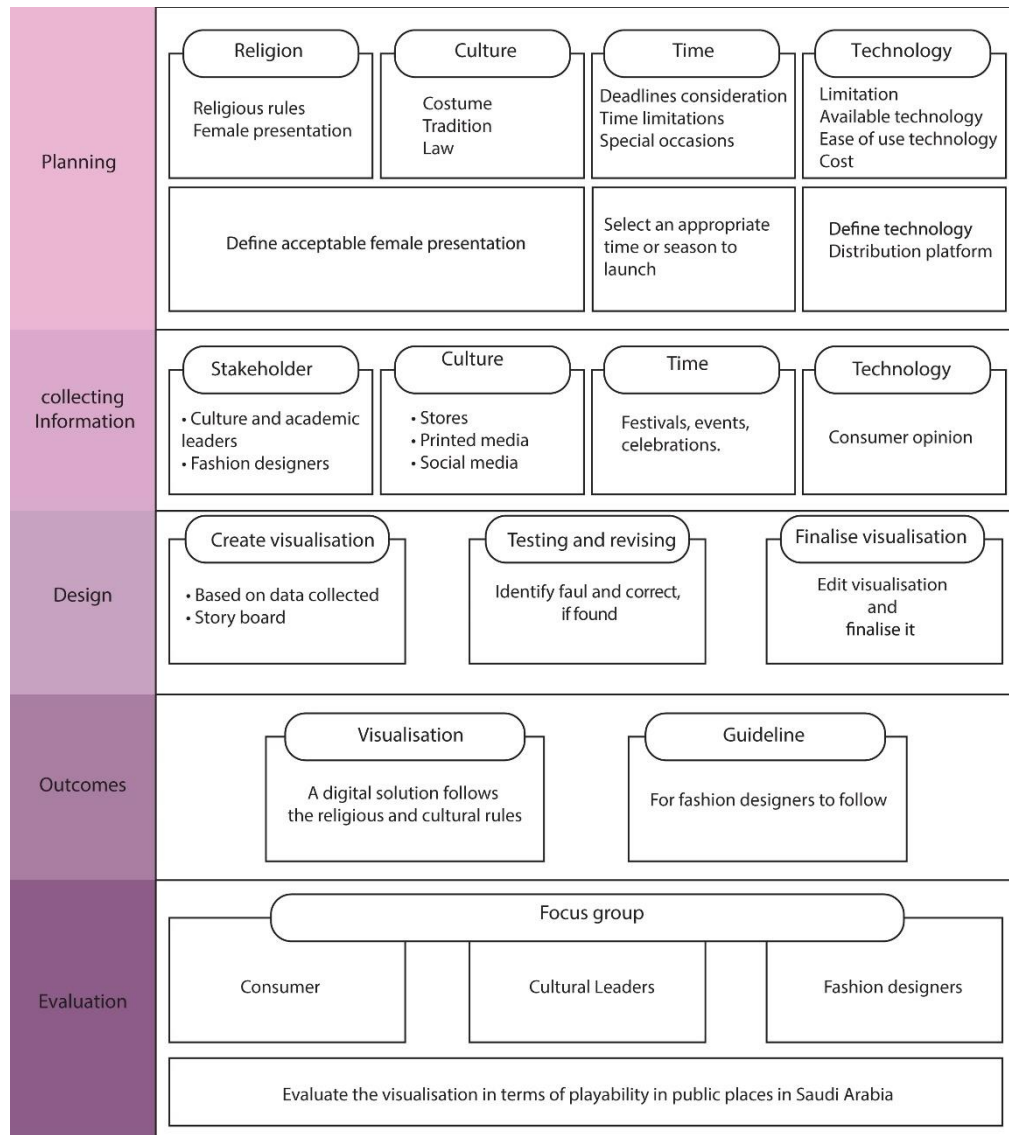


Figure 7-3: Conceptual framework.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The data collection has added value to the research. The interviews with the cultural leaders focused on the religious aspects, while the interviews with fashion designers identified a number of cultural and commercial aspects relating to female presentation and the acceptability of a digital fashion show. Also, consumer questionnaires identified the cultural perspective toward the fashion show and what is the most acceptable form of female presentation.

### **7.3 Framework Description**

#### **7.3.1 Planning Phase**

The first step of any process is that of planning, including the need to define the variables in the planning stage of the research. This research focuses on religion, culture and technology, to establish acceptance for the visualization of a digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia.

Religious and cultural issues are key elements in the acceptance of any new product or idea in any Muslim community, and particularly in a conservative country such as Saudi Arabia. It is therefore vital to first establish the limitations.

##### **7.3.1.1 Religion**

The main aim in this phase is to determine what is acceptable and unacceptable in the public appearance of a woman. As the subject of this research is fashion shows, it is essential to establish the limitations surrounding the presentation of a model's body in response to Saudi Arabia's laws, which are subject to the laws of the Islamic religion. The main element is therefore to identify what is forbidden in Islam in terms of female presentation in public, i.e. hair, body, face and garments. These are described in section 5.3 and apply to the model while she is presenting each garment, in order to ensure the acceptance of this digital fashion show from the religious perspective.

##### **7.3.1.2 Culture**

It is vital to establish the relevant customs and traditions, as these vary between communities. Some cultures have a limited influence on the social acceptance of a new



idea, while in others, culture plays a central role. In addition, it is essential to understand the laws of a country in order to obtain the necessary permits for any activity, due to laws being compatible with a specific religion and culture.

As it was mentioned in section 2.2.1, the Saudi Arabian culture is unique in terms of its market and consumers. The acceptance of any new idea in this society depends on being compatible with the customs, traditions and culture of the community. The Islamic religion constitutes the most significant influence on the Saudi culture (section 5.3.1). Therefore, this culture is ready to accept any new idea as long as it is compatible with the teachings of the Islamic religion.

#### **7.3.1.3 Time**

In order to ensure its acceptance, it is vital to choose an appropriate time and place to reveal a new idea or product. This assists in highlighting a proposed event, which in this case is a fashion show. Activities, festivals and events (i.e. national day celebrations) are only celebrated at a certain time of year, while there are a number of annual festivals which permit males and females to inhabit the same place at the same time, i.e. the Ramadan festivals taking place in old Jeddah city. As mentioned in section 5.6.1, fashion designers take the opportunity when celebrations and events are being held to showcase their designs. Also, when collecting the needed information to create the visualisation, it is important to choose the time of the collection and set up a timeline based on the seasonal nature of fashion seasons and its calendar.

#### **7.3.1.4 Technology**

It is important to determine the distribution platform for the presentation of the visualization. Each platform has its own requirements, equipment and method of presentation. More advanced technology implies a higher cost and the need for a specialized team to create the visualization, and therefore budget limitations may influence the choice of the type of platform for the presentation. Moreover, one of the essential aspects of choosing the technology to create the digital fashion show is ease of use, as this current research seeks to identify a simple method to produce a digital fashion

show, i.e. one that is affordable for a fashion designer at the start of his/her career and does not require the intervention of technological specialists. However, sometimes not all technologies are available within a specific region, which may lead to an increase in the cost of production.

All of the above aspects must be taken into the consideration in the planning phase.

### 7.3.2 Collecting Information Phase

The method of data collection is important, due to each country or culture possessing its own regulations and limitations of acceptability. In order to establish these limitations, it is necessary to take into account the opinions of the leaders of the jurisdiction of religious opinion and society, as well as the laws of the country. Each of these aspects has its own source information and therefore accessing these sources (as well as the extraction of information), is important to facilitate the process of community acceptance of the product or new idea, and thus reduce the rejection rate.

The sources of information for this current research include religious individuals, stakeholders, stores, consumers and fashion designers, and cover all aspects of the information required. This data is accessed by means of interviews, questionnaires and observation, in order to establish the restrictions of each area or country capable of impacting on the production of any digital fashion design.

Also, it is important to identify the times and places when it is the right time and place to apply the conceptual framework, as there are certain times when people are gathered in a specific place and time, such as events and festivals which result in a larger number of views by consumers. In addition, it is necessary to find what technology is available, in order to apply the framework.

### 7.3.3 Design Phase

In this phase there are 3 stages: create visualisation stage, testing and revising stage, and finalise visualisation. These stages are described below.

### 7.3.3.1 Create Visualisation

Based on the results of the information collected it will be clearer to design the visualisation. This mainly focuses on the female presentation which is the most sensitive aspect in terms of the acceptance of the visualisation in Saudi Arabia. In order to find the information related to it, the results of the collection of information must be applied. In designing the visualisation, the model's presentation must obey different rules. But the most important is to find an acceptable presentation for the garments and the model. The model should be presented in terms of hair, body, and clothing in the form that the religion, culture and tradition find acceptable.

In terms of platform, this is based on the preference of the designers to choose where to present, whether on a website, in stores, social media, etc.

### 7.3.3.2 Testing and Revising

After creating any product, testing and evaluation is an important step. The testing process is to find any fault in this product and gives the opportunity to launch the best version of this product.

In the event of a defect or non-conformity of specifications, this error corrected before it is displayed to the consumer. This stage is considered very important in order not to reject the product before launching it to the public.

Before producing any products tests are required. This to make sure that the final product is of high quality and meets the products standards. However, defaults may occur in tests that result in the faults being avoided in the final products.

### 7.3.3.3 Finalise Visualisation

In this stage, the product is revised and finalised for evaluation before producing it to the public and it is shown to consumers.

### 7.3.4 Outcomes Phase

#### 7.3.4.1 Visualisation:

In this stage, the visualisation is ready and had been revised and ready to be evaluated before publishing.

#### 7.3.4.2 Guideline

In order for the fashion designers to recreate the digital fashion show, one of the framework outcomes is the guideline. This guideline helps to set up culturally accepted digital fashion shows.

### 7.3.5 Evaluation

The design of the digital fashion show was evaluated by three focus groups: (1) consumers; (2) cultural leaders; and (3) fashion designers. The participants evaluated the final product (i.e. the digital fashion show) and expressed their views concerning its acceptability in terms of Saudi Arabian culture. As well as evaluating the digital fashion show, the fashion designers were also asked to evaluate the guidelines outlining how to create a digital fashion show, including the provision of a studio plan, i.e. the positions of cameras and the dimensions of the shooting area.

## 7.4 Implementation of the Framework

Implementation is a means of testing the framework, to enable any modifications in response to any identified issues. To assist in the creation of the visualization, a number of aspects need to be taken into account. These aspects are considered the main topics in which will affect the acceptability of digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia and shown in Figure 7-4.

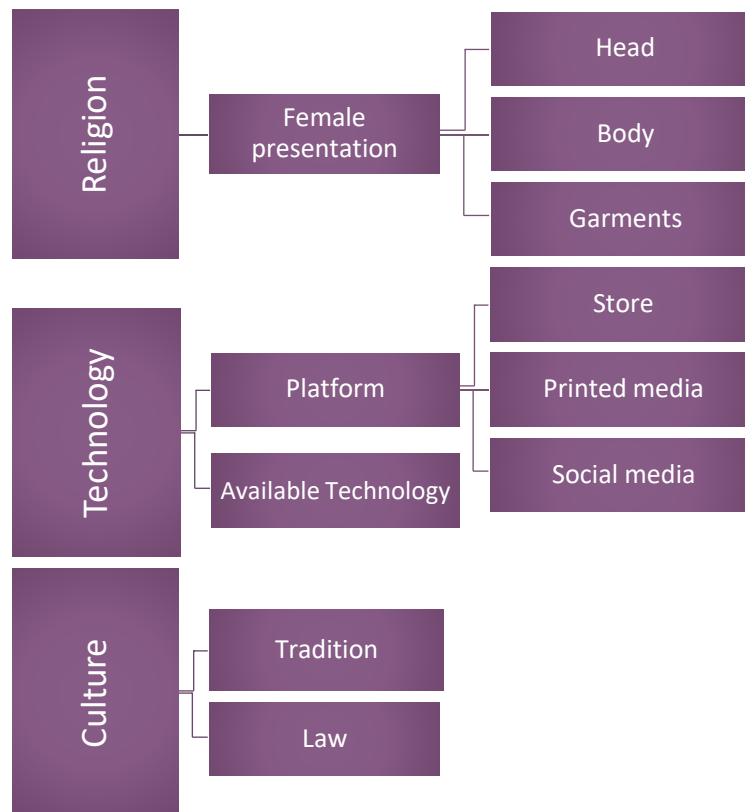


Figure 7-4: Research covered in the data collection.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 7.4.1 Testing Technologies

Because this research proposes a digital solution to facilitate staging in Saudi Arabia, it is important to identify the best platform to present the digital visualisation, in the virtual runway. It is also important to identify a low cost and easy to learn and complete method for implementing the framework. This will resolve the research problem, which concerns beginner fashion designers' difficulties in affording to deliver a real-world fashion show. The study evaluates different methods to create a digital visualisation that is as realistic as possible.

**Three-dimensional (3D) movies**, require the viewer to wear special headwear or eyewear, stereoscopic glasses, and involves showing 2 flat and slightly offset images to create the impression of depth in an image. The drawbacks of this method are that the

glasses are not available for all viewers in a public place, and they are essential to view the visualisation.

**Holograms** allow the viewer to view an object from different angles. They show the viewer the size, colour and shape of an object, similar to pictures. However, holograms comprise different layers of lasers, which can produce complex light interference patterns, including spatial data. There are different types of dimensional hologram images: 1D, 2D, 3D holograms. 3D holograms can be viewed from any angle by a viewer located anywhere around the hologram image (Işık, 2014).

In recent years it has become possible to create Life-Size Interactive 3D Holograms, enabling live actors, singers, or performers in different locations to interact with an audience, or a pre-recorded performance to be shown later, such as the Holography opening ceremony at the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in Saudi Arabia which was created by CISCO, and the appearance of Jean-Luc Melenchon to supporters via a hologram in a technological first for a presidential campaign in France in 2017 (made possible by Musion Events). In the KAUST example, the presenter was able to communicate live with the audience via the hologram, speaking with and replying to audience questions. Whereas, Jean-Luc Melenchon used the technology give a speech to supporters who were in 2 different cities in France.

To create a dynamic holographic system requires a special tandem video camera, to view scenes utilising a spatial light modulator. This does not require the viewer to wear any headgear or eyewear (Ludman, Riccobono and Caulfield, 2002). However, it is costly to create a hologram visualisation due to the sophisticated equipment used.

**Animation** can approximate to reality when produced by very highly skilled and knowledgeable operators with access to modern software, such as Nuke. The software imitates the movements of the characters. To create any animated movie takes a long time and a whole team is needed to create a scene. Each piece of footage uses several dots to create a character. The drawbacks of this method are its high cost of the production and postproduction processes, which are also lengthy, and demand highly skilled software users to produce a realistic result.

**Chroma key.** Chroma keying is a technique using a green or blue background to create a special effect. The green background is more popular, as green conflicts less with the human skin tone. In addition, green is easier to light with artificial lighting, which is important to ensure a well-lit background (Foster, 2010). It is a popular tool in the film industry, entertainment shows, weather forecasting and various movie making studios. Compared to other techniques it is the easiest, cheapest, and fastest technique for producing digital visualisations. Also, it is commonly understood due to its widespread use.

Table 7-1: Comparison between the tested software

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

	3D movies	Hologram	Animation	Chroma Key
3D/ 2D	3D	Both	Both	2D
Easy to buy the equipment to create	No	No	Yes	Yes
Easy to create for non-expert	No	No	Depends on level of reality of the animation	Yes
Cost	High	High	High	Low

Based on the choices above, the Chroma key technique (the green screen) was selected to shoot the digital visualisation.

#### 7.4.1.1 Filming Studio

The film studios in De Montfort University are fully equipped with requirements such as a multi-camera, full lighting setup, a viewing gallery, and blue and green screen studios. This helps to create videos capable of taking advantage of colour keying to merge video with computer graphics. The studio therefore needs to be in a controlled environment.



Figure 7-5: Image of the studio used for testing and creating the digital fashion show.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 7.4.1.1.1 Studio Testing

Tests commenced in the green screen studios in De Montfort University. These studios are fully equipped with all the necessary type of equipment for the video shoot, i.e. lighting, cameras and computers (see Figure 7-6). This test started with setting up the camera in position. Lighting was also set up to the highest brightness to avoid shadows as much as possible, after testing the lighting set up and brightness several times.



Figure 7-6: De Montfort University studio used to create the digital fashion show.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)



The model was positioned in front of the camera and filming commenced. This model wore a sleeveless knee-length dress, in order to digitally modify the uncovered areas (i.e. arms and legs) in line with the findings of the data collection. This type of dress was used to give an idea of how any garment can be digitally modified and find the correct method to digitalize the image without losing the attractiveness of the garment.



Figure 7-7: Positioning the model for video shooting.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Masking tape was placed on the ground of the green background, to mark where the stage began and ended. This assisted the video digital editing and helped the model used in the filming to imagine the location of the runway. In addition, the background was marked with masking tape to position the digital background if moving cameras were used to create a realistic view of the final product.



Figure 7-8: Placing masking tape on Chroma.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The background was subsequently replaced with a virtual fashion runway, simulating a real fashion show. The model in the studio therefore moved as if modelling on the runway. The camera captured the movements, with the results saved on the computers, with the video files subsequently modified using specialized software.

#### 7.4.1.1.2 Video Editing

A variety of software packages have been tested in order to edit the digital visualisation, such as Adobe After Effects, Adobe Premiere, Autodesk Maya, Final Cut Pro and Nuke, in order to edit the visualisation. The researcher has evaluated the software in terms of the merits and de merits of each to find which would be most suitable for the research purpose, in terms of being low in cost, easy to learn and the most acceptable final visualisation produced.

Different software can be used either to create animations or to edit videos, depending on what the user wants. If the desire is to create a 3D animated model, Maya and Nuke are suitable to create it. If the aim is to create a special effect on a digital visualization, such as masking the background and installing the intended background - in the research case, the fashion show runway - Adobe After Effects and Final Cut Pro are the target software. However, Final Cut Pro can only be downloaded on Mac computers,

as it is only compatible with IOS operating system. On the other hand, After Effects is a cross-platform compatible which means it can be downloaded on IOS and Windows and that makes it accessible to more users. It is also more powerful than Final Cut Pro when it comes to motion graphic design. Moreover, After Effects would integrate effectively with Adobe Premier, video editing software developed by Adobe as well, to give the aimed results. Therefore, Adobe After Effects and Adobe Premiere were selected in this research because the aim is to display a real model presenting the garments. This would have to have a high level of expertise to create it in 3D, which most users would not have. Based on the studio testing, Chroma Key has been chosen to create the visualisation in. Therefore, there is no need to use the 3D animated model. After Effects is a sufficient software to replace the green background with a chosen background to display.

The table below shows briefly the differences between the tested software

Table 7-2: Differences in software tested in the production of the visualisation

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

	Cross-platform compatible (Windows +IOS)	3D Modelling and animation Editing 3D animations	Post-production software		Price
			Motion graphic (Special effect)	Video editing software	
Adobe premier	✓			✓	£235/year
Adobe After Effects	✓		✓		£235/year
Autodesk Maya	✓	✓			£1749/year
Final Cut Pro	IOS only		limited	✓	£299.22
Nuke	✓	✓	✓	✓	£3398

The key light is an easy function to use to remove or key out a specific colour from the video. This function helps to remove all greens, the background, from the clip, thus isolating items (in this case the model), from the background.



Figure 7-9: The video installed into Adobe After Effects.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

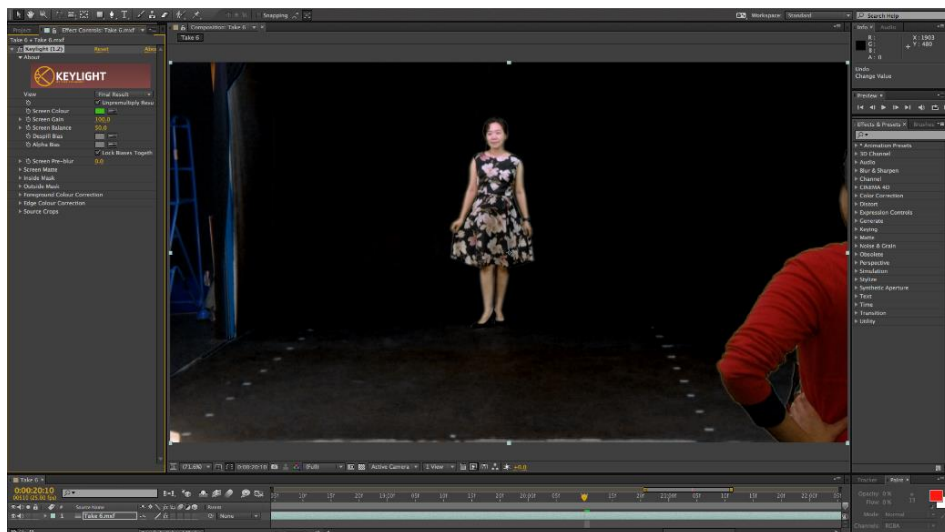


Figure 7-10: Removing the green chroma in the video and isolating the object from the background.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Unnecessary objects (such as those marked in pink in the image below) were masked in Adobe After Effects and removed, in order to position the digital runway background.

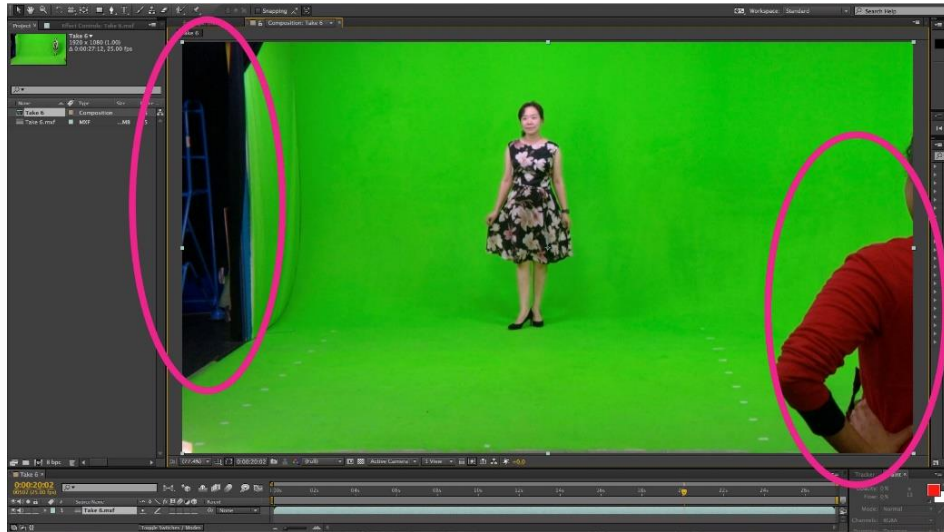


Figure 7-11: Marking unwanted objects in the video.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

As noted previously, masking tape was used on the floor to mark the edges of the digital runway background, as shown in the image below.



Figure 7-12: Marking the floor for the model with masking tape.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

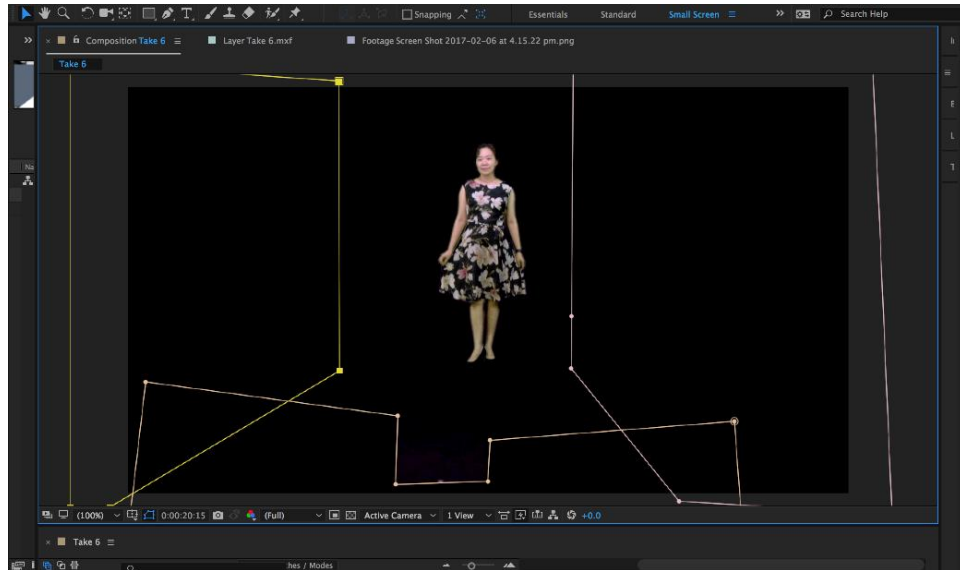


Figure 7-13: Masking all items in the background, in order to install the proposed background.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

After masking all unwanted items, and setting up the edges of the runway, the digital background was installed, as shown in the image below.

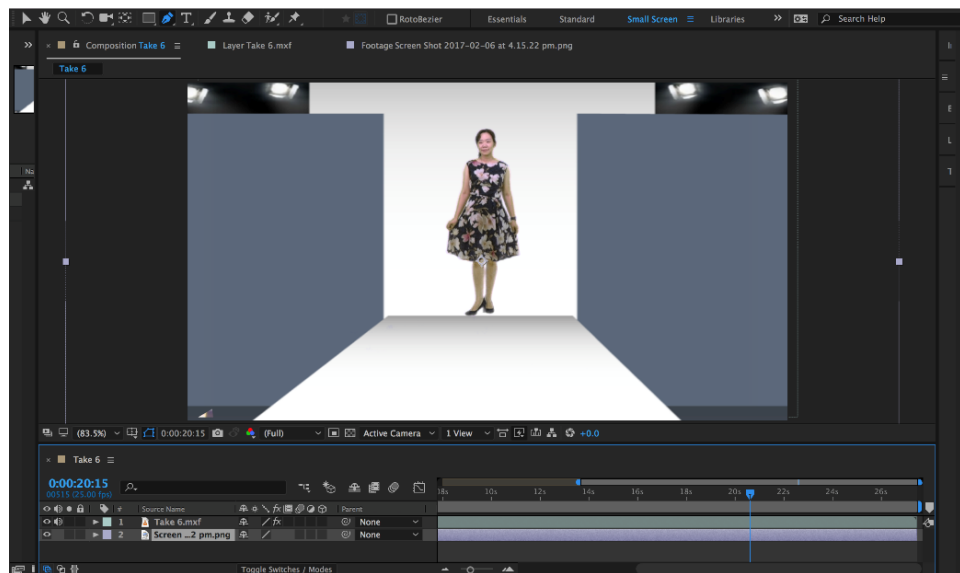


Figure 7-14: Installing the background into the video.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)



The next process was to mask the uncovered body parts in order to digitally modify them, i.e. the model's leg. In zooming in, it was found that resolution of the video was insufficiently high, as demonstrated in the image below. This established the need to use high resolution for a moving object (i.e. the model's leg), and for it to be masked scene by scene. Therefore, the final production needed to take into account the requirement for a high resolution, i.e. 48.888 kHz/ 24 bit U.

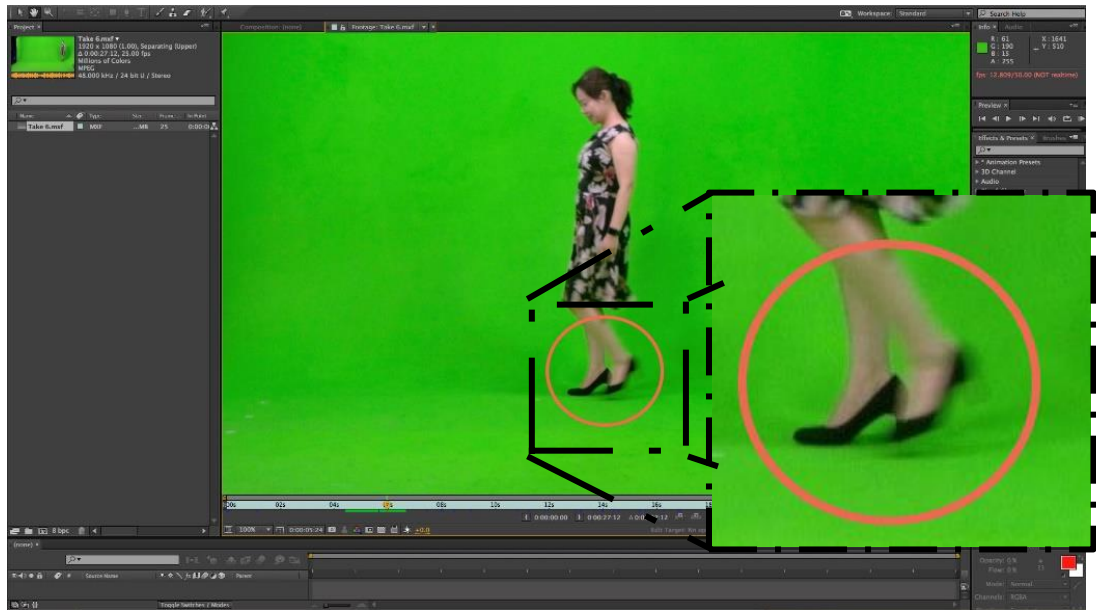


Figure 7-15: Image found to be unclear when zooming in the video.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

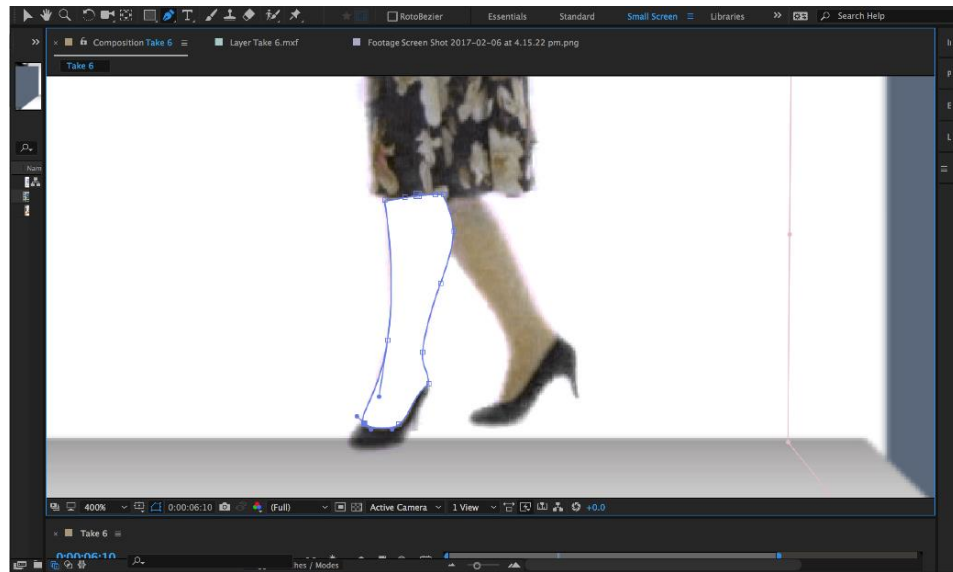


Figure 7-16: Masking the model's leg.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Following this step, a motion tracker was used to track the masked area, i.e. the model's left leg. Minor modifications may be required to the mask, due to the movement of the model. The previously noted lower resolution led to difficulties in masking the moving object, as well as this being time-consuming.

The tests identified a number of considerations to be taken into account when shooting the final video:

- No green garments should be worn.
- Shading is prevented by a good lighting set up.
- Highly transparent fabric should be avoided, as the software failed to recognize light fabric.
- The background and foreground should be lit with different sets of lighting.
- The lighting should be focused on the foreground, with less lighting on the background, in order to obtain a flat background.
- Lighting placed near the floor avoids shadows on legs and feet.
- A very high-resolution file simplifies the editing process and ensures clear footage.



All of the aspects above have an impact on the process of editing the video.

Video shooting took place after several stages. These stages have tested the studio settings and software and helped to choose the displayed garments and the model. This was followed by the post production phase when the video was been edited and finalised to be published. In this process, Adobe Premiere has been used as the editing software as mentioned in the table, as it was the most suitable for the process required.

#### 7.4.2 Define the Model's Key Points

The visualization needs to be created following the rules identified in the data collection and must therefore be focused on the most sensitive aspect, i.e. 'female presentation'. The main key points agreed upon by all parties during data collection were:

1. The model's hair must be covered.
2. Skin tone should not be changed.
3. Any exposed part of the body should be either covered by a skin tone suite, or digitally modified.
  - A. A nude bodysuit can be worn if the exposed area is small and won't change any of the garment's details.
  - B. A nude bodysuit can be a cheaper and easier alternative to cover the body in the event of a small budget.
4. Facial features can be shown.
5. It is preferable not to omit the showing of the model's head.
6. Body details (i.e. the shape of arms and legs and body curves) must be not shown, and therefore should be covered by garments or digitally modified.
7. The following restrictions must apply to garments:
  - A. Garments must cover the area between the chest and the knee.
  - B. In the case of short dresses (i.e. above the knee), the body must be covered by a piece of nude clothing or digitally modified.

- C. In the case of a sleeveless garment, the arms must be covered by a piece of nude clothing, or digitally modified.
- D. A nude bodysuit is preferable in the case of transparent garments, as the garment details will not be shown effectively if digitally modified.

Therefore, the findings identified that the final presentation of the model should be as illustrated below:

In terms of head, hair, and neck:



Figure 7-17: The most acceptable presentation of head and neck identified in the data collection.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The two images above show covered hair and clear facial features. In addition, the participants in the data collection agreed that the neck should also be covered.

The image on the left represents the typical appearance of a woman in Saudi Arabia, i.e. the hair and neck are covered with a piece of rectangle fabric known as a headscarf. The image on the right shows a contemporary method of covering the hair and head by a modern turban and a high-neck top or scarf to cover the neck area. This is mainly used by younger women when they travel to other countries.

When it comes to the presentation of the body and garments, it was agreed that it is preferable to present long modest dresses such as the one illustrated below:



Figure 7-18: Example of most acceptable of dress presentation in data collection.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

This type of dresses cover most of the body and do not reveal any details and curves, and thus matches the points derived from the data collection. However, not all designers wish to design modest pieces of clothing. Thus, for less modest and shorter fashion garments, the body must be covered by a nude suit or digitally modified without changing the skin tone, in order to be more realistic for the viewer, i.e. the image below.



Figure 7-19: Different amendments for the female body.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

The above images clearly show the details of the dress for the audience without any digital modification, (A) whole body digitally covered in nude colour as a full bodysuit, (B) half legs and half arms are digitally covered as half bodysuit, (C) full body digitally distorted and (D) full body is digitally crystal pixelated, thus giving a realistic image for customers of the designed piece. A second example is to blur the body digitally, accompanied by a realistic image of the designed piece. This is demonstrated in the presentation below.



Figure 7-20: Example of body blurring.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

#### 7.4.2.1 Model

The model is chosen according to acceptability for the Saudi Arabian consumers, i.e. with a clear skin, good hands, nails and teeth, healthy hair and regular features.

#### 7.4.2.2 Ethnic Group

The population of Saudi Arabia includes a number of different skin tones and ethnic origins. There is a significant population of Indian and Pakistani ethnic groups. However, a minority group of Saudis are of South East Asian or African origin.

It is therefore considered preferable to have a model of a similar ethnic appearance to most Saudis in the digital fashion show, so the audience can visualise the product on a person more closely related to themselves.

### 7.4.2.3 Hair

Hair length, colours or type is not important in this digital fashion show, due to (as noted previously) the hair being covered in headscarves or a turban, in response to the conclusions of the data collection (i.e. the interviews, questionnaire and observation). This also matches the religious and cultural requirements for a woman's appearance in public.

### 7.4.2.4 Female Presentation Options

A further test was made during the data collection to determine the number of options when it came to female presentation. The major female body has been segmented into three main parts, chest, leg and arm, which are important to consider in terms of providing an acceptable presentation. Also, three different ways of visualising these parts of the body have been developed; natural, blurred and bodysuit. All of these had been compared with covered and uncovered model's hair. This created a grid which demonstrates forty-two options to be tested (Table 7-3). Shaded cells are the presentation options which create the female presentation which include the 3 main parts of the body (chest, leg and arm) against 1 or more different way of visualising these body parts (natural, blurred and bodysuit).

To be able to manage the large number of options a framework has been developed to narrow the number down based on the responses from the data collection. The results from the data collection state that hair must always be covered. Therefore, the number of options has been decreased to half (i.e. twenty-one options). The highlighted cells in the table below shows the option for each body part and how to visualise it.

Table 7-3: Different options for the presentation of a model

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

		Natural			Blurred			Bodysuit		
		Chest	Leg	Arm	Chest	Leg	Arm	Chest	Leg	Arm
Covered Hair	1									
	2									
	3									
	4									
	5									
	6									
	7									
	8									
	9									
	10									
	11									
	12									
	13									
	14									
	15									
	16									
	17									
	18									
	19									
	20									
	21									








		Natural			Blurred			Bodysuit		
		Chest	Leg	Arm	Chest	Leg	Arm	Chest	Leg	Arm
Uncovered Hair	22									
	23									
	24									
	25									
	26									
	27									
	28									
	29									
	30									
	31									
	32									
	33									
	34									
	35									
	36									
	37									
	38									
	39									
	40									
	41									
	42									



This table has been modified for clarification purposes, resulting in only one method of presenting a model’s body. This aspect also was also examined during the data collection.

Table 7-4: Clearer options for female presentation

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)







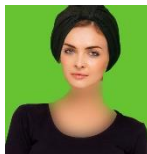












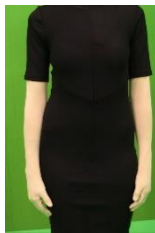
	Natural	Digital modification	Full Bodysuit
Chest			
Arms			
Legs			






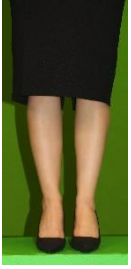
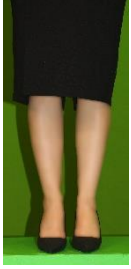

The body was distorted in the digital modification, as in the previous table. However, this modification did not give the desired result, forcing the researcher to find another option to digitally modify the body of the model. In addition, the table limits the options

available, and failed to discuss a number of other options, i.e. short and mid-length sleeves. Therefore, a new table has been created, as shown below.

Table 7-5: Minimizing the number of female presentations

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

		Natural	Digital modification		Full Bodysuit
			Light blurring	Heavy Blurring	
		A	B	C	D
Chest and neck	neck Narrow opening				
	Wide neck opening				
Arms	sleeveless				
	Short sleeve				
	Mid-length sleeves				

Legs	Above knee				
	Knee length				

Blurring was used in this table to modify the body digitally. This table gives more detailed acceptability of female presentation and how it can be modified. The images show the differences between neutral, blurred (Gaussian Blur 10, 20) and nude colour bodysuit body parts, with Photoshop used to blur the body parts. As no difference was found between images (B) and (C), images (A), (C) and (D) were used in the questionnaire. Images were used in this part of the test, in order to obtain details for body parts such as arms, legs, chest, and neck. This gave the participants an overview of how such body parts would be displayed if the digital fashion show was available in Saudi Arabia.

According to the results from the data collection, Consumer Survey (1) (5.5) and Consumer Survey 2 (section 5.7), the natural body must not be shown in the digital fashion show. It was therefore decided that the model would wear a bodysuit.

#### 7.4.3 Garments Displayed

The garments selected for display in the digital fashion show need to be tested to establish whether they are appropriate for the filming method selected. In this case, the method was to use a green screen studio. There are a number of restrictions in virtual studio shooting, particularly those that can prove a distraction, and can increase

difficulties in chroma keying, i.e. green garments; patterns; glasses; dirty shoes; frizzy hair; and silver and gold jewellery (Mackey et al., 2017).

The research collaborated with young Saudi fashion designer Lama Taher, the owner of the 'Lum by Lama Taher' brand. Lama provided a sample of her collection to be displayed. These garments were the long casual and occasional dresses popular among Saudi Arabian female consumers, characterized by being simultaneously simple and luxurious. These garments are worn on most occasions by women of all ages in Saudi Arabia, and particularly during Ramadan. In addition, the researcher attempted to push the boundaries of acceptability, and therefore included dresses that were shorter as well as more fitted garments.

#### **7.4.4 Storyboard**

A storyboard is an important element of each visual design, describing each scene shot-by-shot, using a sequence of illustrations. This enables the director and the production team to plan the shot sequences (Cristiano, 2007). Each scene in this digital fashion show must be planned to enable the shots to be taken smoothly, in order to avoid any mistakes. The storyboard includes descriptions of the garments, the model, movements, lighting and camera positions. Appendix M shows the sequence of shots for the current study's digital fashion show.

### **7.5 Framework Outcomes**

#### **7.5.1 Guideline**

The guideline was created during the implementation of the framework. It is a specific guideline applicable to Saudi Arabia in 2018 and can be modified in response to changes in place and time such as different country or in response to contemporary changes.

This guideline is essential to help fashion designers create a digital fashion show. The guideline in this current research has been developed for Saudi fashion designers, i.e. to enable them to set up a culturally acceptable digital fashion show. In addition, a studio layout demonstrates the correct cameras position to obtain the correct shot, while a

background template gives fashion designers an example of the stage that can be used in the creation of a digital fashion show.

### Digital Fashion Show Guidelines

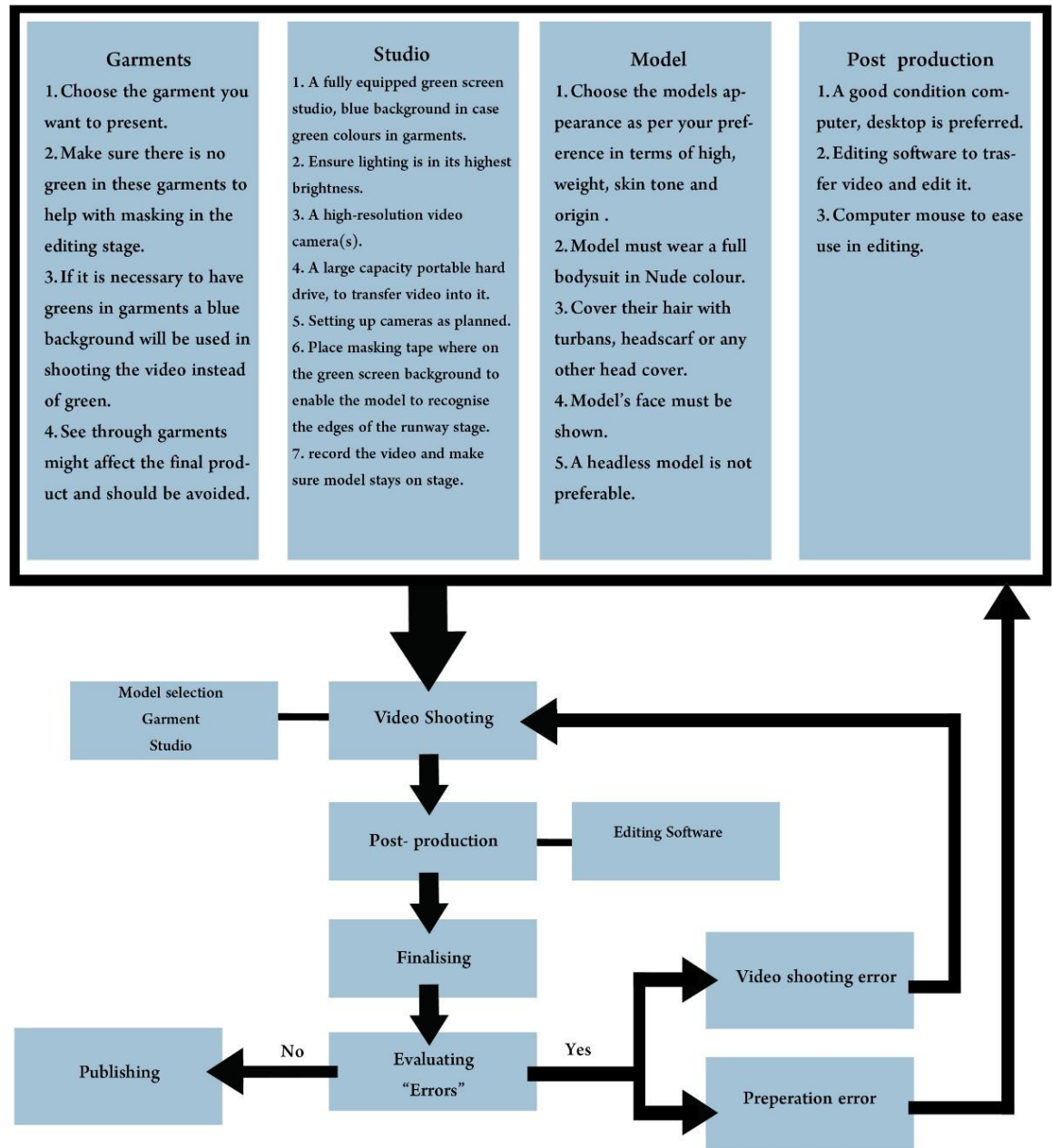


Figure 7-21: Digital fashion show guideline.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

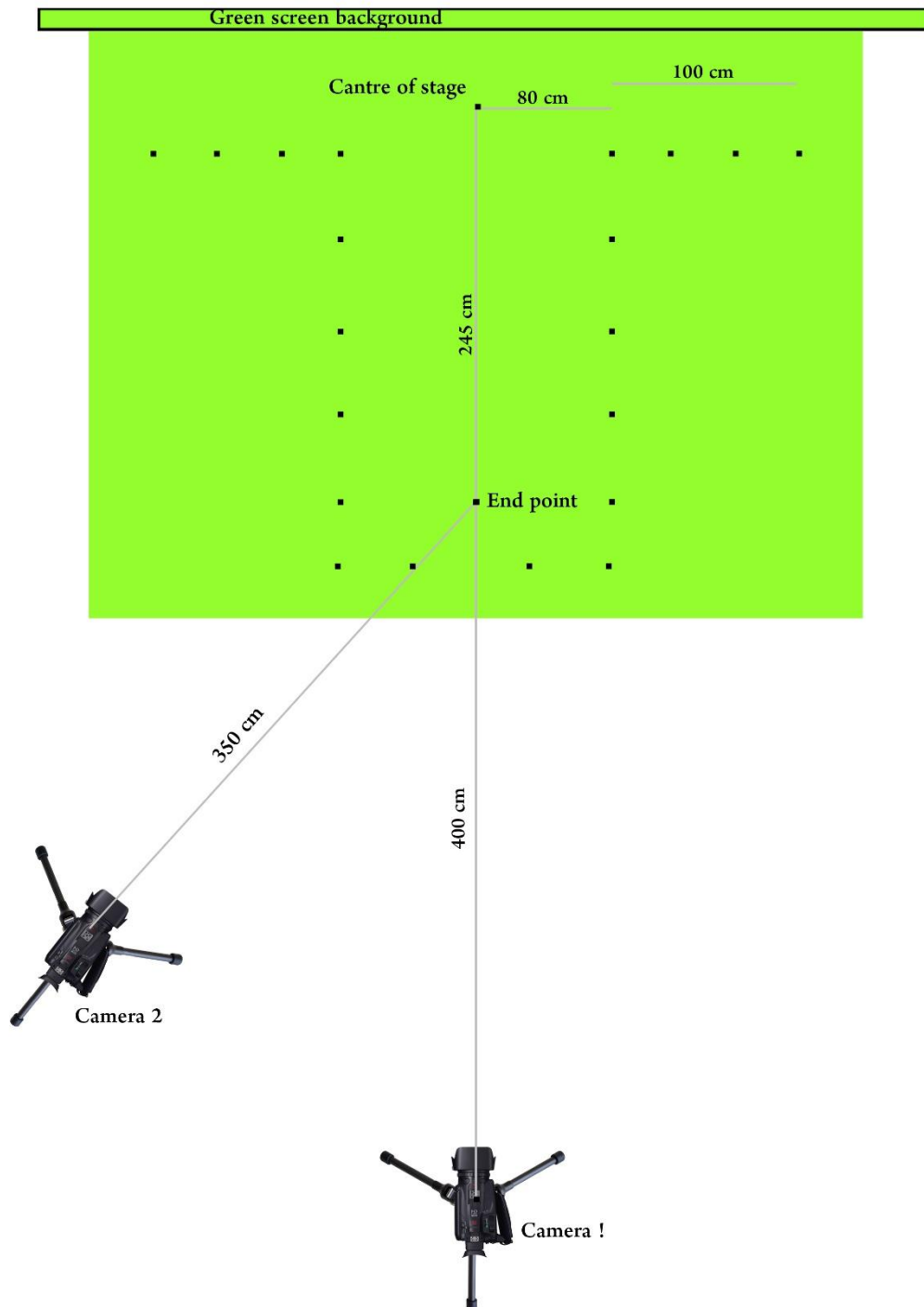


Figure 7-22: Studio layout.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

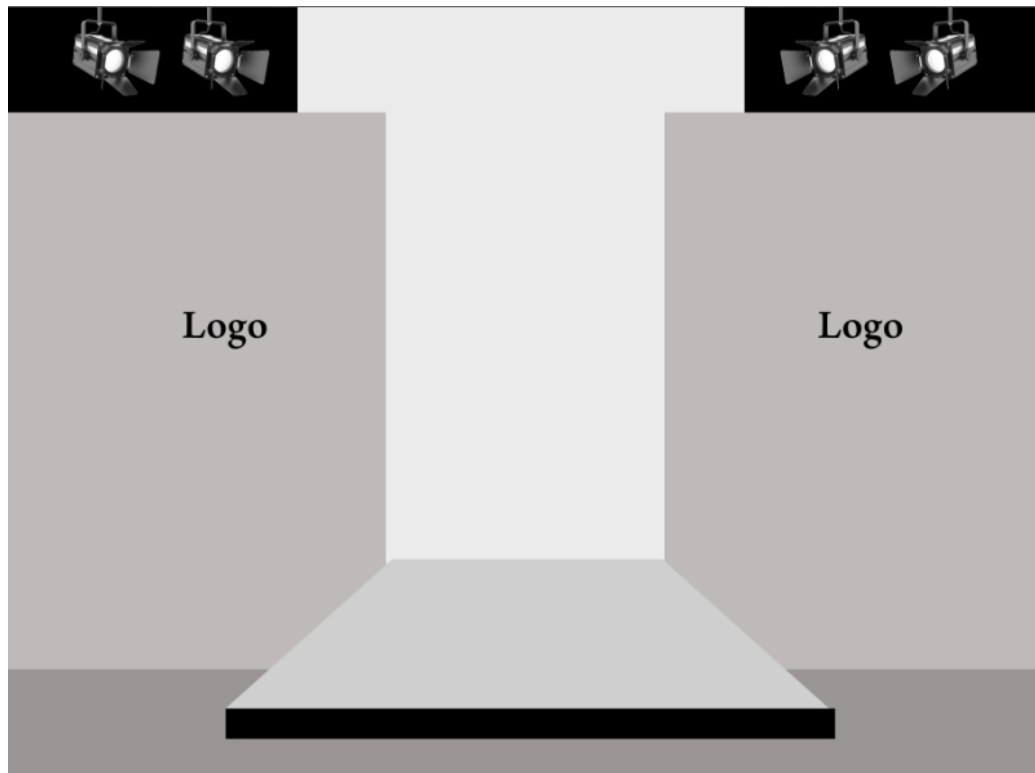


Figure 7-23: Background template.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

### 7.5.2 Visualisation

A fashion show was then created. As indicated above, this digital fashion show is applicable to a specific place and time, i.e. Saudi Arabia in 2018. The outcome, the guidelines, and the digital fashion show can be modified according to time and location.

The video for this current research has been uploaded online and can be found by following the link to YouTube: <https://goo.gl/6jWW34>.



Figure 7-24: A screen capture from the outcome visualization.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

This framework could be applied to any new idea or product related to fashion. This could help improving visualisation of fashion in the industry. Also, it can be applied to advertising where there is some sensitivity toward the presentation of women. Based on the data collected regarding the intended visualisation, the outcome could change. This is due to changes in the main factors (religion, culture, time and technology). This framework is not limited to be applied in Saudi Arabia only, or an Islamic country. This framework can be applied in any country based on differences in the factors. Slight modifications could be made in the framework based on changes in the situation.

## 7.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the development of the theoretical framework for a digital fashion design applicable for use in Saudi Arabia and any other country applying



the same restricted rules. This chapter follows on from the results of the literature review (Chapter 2) and the analysis and discussion of the qualitative and quantitative data (Chapter 5). This chapter has presented easy to follow guidelines to enable the duplication of this digital fashion design in future work, including the development of a five-stage process, which was described step by step.



# Validation of the Framework

## Chapter 8      Validation of the Framework

### 8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the validation and evaluation for the conceptual framework developed in chapter 6. It describes the design for the proposed digital fashion show after implementation of the framework.

The proposed digital fashion show was designed according to the findings from the data collection in terms of appropriate presentation of women and suitable garments. However, some of the garments selected sought to push the boundaries and test the acceptability of items if worn with a bodysuit that were not mentioned as acceptable, to test the responses of interviewees.

The evaluation took the form of focus groups and the testing process was intended to evaluate and validate the acceptance level for the planned digital fashion show framework for use in Saudi Arabia.

### 8.2 Preparing for the Focus Group

In order to validate the proposed digital fashion show framework, a focus group session was conducted with three different groups: consumers, cultural leaders and fashion designers.

To ensure valid results, the stages below were followed:

- Sending general information out about the topic to the focus group participants;
- Identifying the purpose of the study;
- Emphasizing the importance of the participants' opinions;
- Arrangements of the location and time for each focus group session;
- Creating a set of clear and relatively short questions; and
- Providing a neutral atmosphere allowing participants to sit in a circle.

### 8.3 Analysis of the Focus Groups Findings

The analysis of the findings obtained from the focus groups sessions was constructed around the aim of the study, which was to “explore the acceptability of a digital fashion

show as an alternative to a traditional fashion show in Saudi Arabia". The analysis of data took place according to the following steps:

- Read each transcript repeatedly;
- Code the data thematically by reviewing the transcribed discussions and using the questions as classifications.
- Analyse every question individually;
- Write a summary describing the discussion in each focus group session; and
- Write comments to be used in the final report;

#### 8.4 Focus Group Sessions

The focus group sessions were completed in Jeddah in July 2017 and were moderated by the researcher herself. Table 8-1, Table 8-2 and Table 8-3 show the profiles for the focus group sessions: noting that there were 36 participants from the three different categories, 26 of whom were consumers (five focus group sessions), five of whom were a cultural leaders figures (one focus group session), and a further five were fashion designers (one focus group session). Each session lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour and was audio recorded.

Table 8-1: Profile of the cultural leaders focus group.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Focus Group Sessions	Gender	Number of Participants
Focus Group 1	Female	2
	Male	3

Table 8-2: Consumer focus group participants.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Focus Group Sessions	Educational Background	Gender	Number of Participants
Focus Group 1	Business and finance	Female	4
Focus Group 2	Engineering and finance	Male	5
Focus Group 3	HR	Male	6
Focus Group 4	Education, art and design	Female	4
Focus Group 5	IT	Female	7

Table 8-3: Profile of the fashion designers focus group.

(Source: Sabbahi, 2019)

Focus Group Sessions	Gender	Number of Participants
Focus Group 1	Female	4
	Male	1

#### 8.4.1 Findings from the Cultural Leaders' Focus Group

This section outlines the main findings obtained from the focus groups session for the cultural leaders. Five questions were posed in this focus group session, which was conducted to determine the beliefs, interpretations and attitudes of cultural leaders regarding the digital fashion show framework and the model's appearance to assess whether any suggestions would be made to improve the digital fashion show. The subsequent sections provide the study findings under each of the associated themes.

**Theme 1:** Opinion about the digital fashion show and its suitability to replace live fashion show

When responding to this theme, the interviewees in the focus group were asked:

What is your opinion about the digital fashion show? And could it replace live fashion shows?

There was agreement from all the participants in the cultural leaders focus group that the digital fashion show is a good idea. Moreover, they confirmed that in the Saudi context this type of fashion show would afford a realistic substitute to the traditional live fashion show under cultural and religious consideration. Speaking about this, one of participants stated *“The digital fashion show is a good option to replace the live fashion shows currently: for the reason that, instead of watching a real model wearing attractive dresses walking around in front of men, it would be more suitable for Saudi individuals to watch on screen. This would be very acceptable in our culture.”*

Another point of view from another participant was that there is no problem regarding the digital presentation of garments:

*“In my opinion, if we speak about the presentation of garments, this would not be a problem: rather the problem is the way of our thinking. For Arabs, anything presented on television or any other media tools is acceptable, but if it were to happen live in front of people it will be a problem. This shows the contradictions within Saudi communities.”*

**Theme 2:** The acceptability of the model’s appearance in the digital fashion show

Under this theme, the researcher aimed to uncover the participants’ opinions about the model’s appearance in the digital fashion show by asking open-ended questions:

Is the model's appearance acceptable in the digital fashion show, in terms of garments, bodysuit, head covering?

In terms of garments, the findings reveal the majority of the participants thought that the items shown would be acceptable as long as the model covers her body and hair.

Several interesting points were raised here; specifically: *“What city in Saudi Arabia will display the digital fashion show, as cities in Saudi Arabia are not the same, some cities are less conservative than others. For example, in Jeddah it would be more acceptable. In general, the model's appearance is acceptable as long as it will be shown in front of women only, but if it is decided to show it in front of men then the shorter tighter dresses are not acceptable at all”*.

In relation to head coverings, all the participants agreed that it is not compulsory for models to cover the hair with a veil; for example, it would be acceptable to use other means such as hats. One participant clarified: *“It is not required to cover the head with a veil, but it is required to cover the hair by some means, and I can see that in the show there is consistency in the selection of hats with the clothing displayed”*.

In terms of the bodysuit, some participants stated *“It is a very good idea and acceptable as the model's form is not obvious and clear. Bodysuits generally are considered an appropriate solution”*. Conversely, one participant felt the model's appearance was unacceptable, as the features of her body could be seen despite the suit.

### **Theme 3:** Effectiveness of the digital fashion show

To explore the participant's views regarding this theme, the researcher asked the interviewees to reveal their thoughts about the effectiveness of the digital fashion show: *“Do you think that the digital fashion show is an effective way to show the garments, and does it help you decide whether to buy the clothes?”*

The mainstream response given in the cultural leaders' focus group sessions was that the digital fashion show displayed the garments just as efficiently as in a live fashion show, and that it helped them make decisions about buying clothes. In this regard one participant noted: *“As a man, I am not interested in buying women's clothing, but if my wife were to watch the video, she could choose her clothes efficiently”*.

**Theme 4:** Where should the digital fashion show be distributed?

The researcher aimed to determine the optimum location for the digital fashion show according to the opinions of the focus group participants. Thus, the interviewees were asked: “Do you think that a digital fashion show is appropriate for display in public places or stores, on the internet, or at fashion events?”

The majority of the cultural leaders focus group respondents said they would prefer the digital fashion not be displayed in a public place, but that in store, in malls, on the internet and via social media would be acceptable. However, one of the participants specified it that the best place to show the video would be in store, suggesting: *“...Each store could replace the mannequins in the store window with screens showing the garments displayed in-store”*. A further respondent provided more details about which online media they deemed to be appropriate outlets for the show: *“To spread the show faster I suggest publishing it via the internet (websites, social media and online stores)”*. This shows that the cultural leaders are aware of the changes happening in Saudi Arabia and support these changes, if they follow a framework that does not conflict with the Islamic religion.

Another cultural leader figure commented that if short dresses were to be part of the fashion show, then it would be preferable to *“...conduct these shows with women gender audience only events. However, websites and social media would be a good place to share the show”*. Another of the respondents linked the preferred location to cultural and religious concerns:

*“...as a man I shouldn't watch, but nowadays everybody is watching everything on social media, all actresses are in the movies and everywhere, it might be increasingly normal, but in terms of showing respect for culture and religion, the video should only be shown if the person is wearing modest clothing.”*



**Theme 5:** Suggestions to improve the digital fashion show

The findings of this theme indicate that the majority of the focus group participants were concerned most about the model's appearance, i.e. the designer must cover the body of the model with a looser bodysuit; garments should not show the body's features and curves.

One of the respondents stated *"It is the usual in our culture that males are not involved in fashion shows if females are attending. Also, we consider ourselves as a more conservative Islamic country, and we do respect our religion which is the biggest influence in our lives. Thus, we believe that the dresses in the digital fashion show should not be transparent or reveal any part of the body, except the feet and the face"*.

Similarly, one of the other participants added:

*"In general, the clothes should be loose not tight or transparent, showing the features of the model's body."*

#### 8.4.2 Findings from the Focus Groups Comprised of Consumers

This section presents the findings obtained in the five focus groups sessions involving consumers. Six questions were posed in total in these sessions. The aim was to explore the opinions, views and attitude of consumers regarding the proposed digital fashion show framework and its likely effectiveness, focusing also on the model's appearance and any suggestions to improve the digital fashion show. The following sections provide the research findings under each theme. It was noticed that some participants in this group were more conservative than the cultural leaders' focus group participants.

**Theme 1:** Opinion about the digital fashion show, and its suitability to replace a live fashion show

To explore the opinion of participants regarding the fashion show and the possibility of using it as an alternative to a live fashion show; the researcher posed an open question:

What is your opinion about the digital fashion show? And is it a suitable replacement for a live fashion show?

The majority of the participants in the consumer focus group sessions agreed that the digital fashion show is an acceptable idea and they noted that they could readily imagine how the clothes might look. They also noted that they could be a medium to spread fashion related culture and knowledge about clothing, in terms of how to display and wear it. One participant pointed out that this type of fashion show could also help a man to choose clothes with his wife, as this media provides the opportunity for individuals to imagine how the clothes would look. It also helps fashion designers to promote their collection.

In relation to its suitability to replace a live fashion show, the majority of the interviewees explained that digital fashion shows fill the gap left by the absence of live fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. However, several participants mentioned that if digital fashion shows could be fully realistic then they could become an excellent alternative to live fashion shows. Another participant observed: *"The digital fashion shows is very acceptable because it works like a live fashion show and there is no difference between the two in terms of how the clothing is presented. The digital fashion show is very close to a real live fashion show"*. In contrast, one participant stated that they would prefer it if the model could be replaced with a mannequin.

**Theme 2:** The acceptability of model's appearance in the digital fashion show

In this respect the researcher used open questions regarding the acceptability of the model's appearance in the digital fashion show. The respondents were asked: Is the model's appearance acceptable in the digital fashion show, in terms of garments, bodysuit, head cover?

The findings relating to this theme showed agreement among all the respondents participating in the focus group sessions. The model's appearance was considered to be acceptable if she is wearing modest clothing, which does not cling to the figure or appear transparent.

However, the respondents in focus group five were reluctant to accept the presence of women in the fashion show, even if they would be wearing wide and long clothing.

One participant in this group asserted: *"As a conservative society we do not accept the appearance of women in public without a veil, due to religious beliefs and traditions"*. Another participant noted: *"... The show is acceptable, but the customs and traditions of society do not accept the idea, even with the existence of a bodysuit."*

Furthermore, the mainstream of the consumer focus groups participants believed that short clothes would not be acceptable. In general, short clothes are not accepted in Saudi society currently, although in the future it is expected that this will change. On this matter one respondent mentioned: *"Short dresses are currently not accepted in our community for display in public places, the audience accepts the show but the society would not."* The same respondent did however comment, that the show might be acceptable if displayed *"in women only shops, where the sales persons and buyers are all women"*.

Regarding the wearing of a head covering, the majority of the interviewees agreed that the head coverings would be acceptable and accepted that as long as the hair is covered and that this need not mean the wearing of headscarves. On this topic, one of the interviewees stated: *"It does not matter how the hair is covered, as long as it is covered."* Three other participants did comment that choosing to wear a head covering is a matter of personal choice, and the model or any other woman has the freedom to choose whether to cover her hair or not. Another participant pointed out: *"As long as we are watching women on television, what prevents the viewer from viewing the show without a covering over the model's hair or a bodysuit"*. Moreover, a further participant commented: *"The show is considered part of the purchase process, and whoever does not wish to see it, wherever it is displayed, has the freedom not to watch"*.

In relation to the question about whether to ask the model to wear a bodysuit, the majority of the consumers criticized the bodysuit, saying that it is very annoying and affects the overall look of the outfit. This is expressed by one participant, who stated:

*"The bodysuit is not acceptable because it ruins the model's appearance and the clothing also: the style looks ugly. If I decided to buy a piece I would not wear a bodysuit, so when I see something in a fashion show, I will go to the official website or check on*

*Instagram or anywhere to see it on the model without the bodysuit. I can see it then as it would be worn, and I could then buy it. How are you going to convince me to buy the clothes if the whole fashion show is ruined by a bodysuit".* Some of the other participants mentioned that as regards the bodysuit, its use depends on the preferences of the target audience, the colour of the body suit and the design of the clothes.

For example, one participant stated: *"Although, one colour might be right for a model different skin tones require different colour bodysuits"*. Another participant noted: *"If the colour of the suit varied, then that would affect the displayed piece either negatively or positively, but preferably a slightly looser bodysuit would show the viewer clearly that the model is wearing a bodysuit"*.

### **Theme 3:** Effectiveness of the digital fashion show

With regard to the theme of effectiveness, the following questions were asked to reveal the participants' opinions: "Do you think that the digital fashion show is an effective way to show the garments, and does it help you decide whether to buy the clothes?"

The unanimous response from the focus group sessions was that the digital fashion show is an effective way to show and present garments. The respondents noted that a digital fashion show is a good way to discover how the garments look, and to help fashion designers promote their collections, especially in the Gulf countries. Moreover, all the participants observed that digital fashion shows help customers determine whether to buy the clothes.

One participant observed: *"Yes, as men we do not buy clothes for females because we do not know what fits them, so the digital fashion show would help us to imagine what the dress looks like when being worn"*.

Some of the interviewees did raise issues regarding the choice of garments, including the model's size, the fabric used and the description on the label. Also, some participants suggested it would be helpful to create a plus size version of the digital fashion show.

**Theme 4:** Where should the digital fashion show be distributed?

To explore the respondents' views regarding the best place to display the digital fashion show, the researcher asked an open question: "Do you think that a digital fashion show is appropriate for display in public places or stores, on the internet, or at fashion events?"

The majority of respondents stated that they thought it would be better not to air the digital fashion show in a public place, but that it would be reasonable to do so in clothing stores, and via the internet (mainly social media). In conjunction with online catalogues and fashion show events, the digital fashion show makes it easier for customers to buy clothes and gives viewers an idea about how to wear items, as well as being an effective way of advertising garments. Furthermore, some participants mentioned that they would find it acceptable if the digital fashion show was displayed in public places, such as shopping mall, stores and billboards. Although, another participant emphasized that the show should only be displayed in female only stores.

Expressing a different point of view, three interviewees asserted that the show should be integrated into the purchase process, and so, whoever does not wish to see it, wherever it is displayed, is free not to watch.

**Theme 5:** Suggestions to improve the digital fashion show

This theme identifies the recommendation of consumers on how the digital fashion show could be improved in future versions. In order to ensure views were given in depth the interviewees were asked open questions as follow: What do you suggest to improve the digital fashion show?

Several items were suggested by the interviewees including: *"As it is a new idea to society, the clothes must be modest, so that the community accepts this option; it may then later be adapted to allow shorter clothes"*.

The responses did seem to prefer avoiding public showings of the video, but they thought it would be reasonable were they displayed on a tablet that the buyer could

browse privately; although again it was mentioned that this option should be for a female audience.

The participants commented on the visualisation after viewing it, and the interviewees were asked the following open question: After watching digital fashion show, do you have any comments about it?

The list below concludes the parameters elements identified within the consumers' focus groups after watching the video proposed:

- Uncovering hair: which has been rejected because it is not obeying to the Islamic rules and the culture of Saudi Arabia.
- Not showing short dresses: due to religious and cultural aspects, short dresses are not acceptable to be presented in the video.
- Unwanted contrasts (short dress and head covering): because of the contradiction. Headscarves seen as a way to conform the aspect of modesty whereas short dresses are complete contrast it.
- It is too early to judge whether society would accept the show, but for now long dresses are preferred, with an option to display shorter ones in future;
- General acceptance that models appear in social media, but that their live presence is completely unacceptable; and

Most focus groups (4/5 groups) agreed that nowadays is the right time to display this show. However, there was one group who strongly disagreed and who were more conservative and mentioned that this is not the right time for this type of fashion show.

#### **8.4.3 Findings from the Fashion Designers' Focus Group**

This section presents the results from the focus group session conducted with the fashion designers. There were six questions posed during the focus group session, aimed at collating the interpretations and attitudes of fashion designers regarding the digital fashion, in terms of the model's appearance, the effectiveness of the fashion show, the best place to display the digital fashion show and its suitability as a replacement for a live

fashion show. Finally, suggestions to improve the digital fashion show were elicited. The following section presents the findings from this focus group.

**Theme 1:** Opinions about the digital fashion show and its suitability to replace live fashion shows

This theme summarizes the perception of designers toward the digital fashion show and its suitability to replace live shows. The researcher used open questions to answer the following: “What is your opinion about the digital fashion show? And do you feel that a digital fashion show is a suitable replacement for a live fashion show?”

The finding under this theme showed that the majority of participants emphasize that this type of fashion show is considered the most convenient way to present a fashion show in a conservative community such as Saudi Arabia.

In this context, three participants in the focus group explained that behind their acceptance of digital fashion show there is the fact that when any designers want to present a live fashion show, they have to have a license to do so. However, there is no ability to obtain a license required to set up a live fashion show in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, a digital fashion show is the easiest and most available and convenient way to produce a fashion show. One participant further added: *“In Saudi Arabia it is impossible to put on a fashion show due to the rules of the country: we have tried many times to hold fashion shows in the past, but they didn't all work.”*

**Theme 2:** The acceptability of the model’s appearance in the digital fashion show

In this section, the researcher asked open questions about the acceptability of the model’s appearance in the digital fashion show. The participants were asked: Is the model's appearance acceptable in the digital fashion show, in terms of garments, bodysuit and head cover?

The majority of the designers stated that they found the appearance generally acceptable, but that the majority would prefer to use a professional model. In this regard,

one of the participants clarifies: *"...Overall the model was fine. I would have preferred the model to be more professional, to display the garments in more professional way".*

Another participant stated that the digital fashion show was acceptable, but mentioned some points for future references:

*"...I was very impressed with the clothes displayed. And yes they are acceptable. I like all the long dresses. The shorter ones are just normal dresses, nothing new there. Overall the displayed garments do not seem to be a full collection. It differs from a collection."*

In relation to the issue of the model wearing a head covering, it was apparent that most respondents would prefer that the model cover her head with a head scarf when wearing long dresses, but that when wearing shorter dresses, a hat or other covering would be preferable.

In a similar context, one of the participants noted that in her experience she finds the head cover works very well with certain pieces of clothing. She noted that it is a good idea at first to encourage people to understand that clothes are suitable for both veiled and non-veiled women. Another participant added to this, explaining: *"The hijab has etiquette, it is forbidden for the woman to wear tight short clothes and cover her hair. A veiled woman would not be satisfied by simply having covered her hair, if she were wearing short clothes."*

Discussing the bodysuit, the findings of the focus group were that about half of the interviewees considered it unnecessary to wear a bodysuit. One participant commented that it makes no difference if a bodysuit is worn or not. However, this participant was optimistic that society is increasingly open-minded. The same participant added: *"...it does not matter if the bodysuit is worn or not worn. They are all the same from my point of view. Society has become open-minded and I do not think that wearing or not wearing a bodysuit in the fashion show would be a problem".*



**Theme 3:** Effectiveness of the digital fashion show

To establish the effectiveness of the digital fashion show and its role in the consumer industry, the researcher asked the interviewees an open-ended question: “Do you think that the digital fashion show is an effective way to show the garments, and does it help you decide whether to buy the clothes?”

The majority of the participants in this focus group agreed that holding a digitally displayed fashion show would make it possible to effectively show the garments and allow customers to clarify details about the clothes.

On this issue, one participant mentioned that a digital fashion is an excellent way to illustrate the details of the garments clearly, as well as to shed light on how fabric flows as the model moves. On this topic, another respondent, speaking from her experience as a designer, asserted that the fashion shows express the beauty of the design as it appears perfectly to the customer. The same respondent continued by saying: *“As a fashion designer, I want the collection to be displayed in the best way, where all details and the beauty of the design appear to the customer and this video showed all of that.”*

**Theme 4:** Where should the digital fashion show be distributed?

The decision about where to display the digital fashion show is a concern raised here in relation to the conservative character of Saudi society. Specifically, the researcher aimed to find out the views of the focus group regarding this matter. Firstly, the interviewees were asked: “Do you think that a digital fashion show is appropriate for display in public places or stores, on the internet, or at fashion events?”

The responses to this theme reveal that the majority of designers in the focus group confirm that they would agree to display a digital fashion show in public places, but that it would not be acceptable if the show embraced fashions with short or sleeveless clothing. In this regard, one of the participants in this focus group confirmed that: *“I feel that our society is still conservative and will not accept short or sleeveless clothing. I expect it would be acceptable if you were to show only long dresses and abayas”.*

In relation to the additional options proposed, which include stores, malls, the internet and fashion events, the majority of the interviewees found that stores and malls would be an accepted location for the digital show, as they are where garments are being purchased. One participant explained why the best places to display digital fashion show are stores and shopping malls: *"...definitely display the digital fashion show in stores and shopping malls, to draw attention to the garments, so customers can show an interest in the pieces and buy with confidence"*.

However, most of the participants specified that it would be more appropriate to display the garments online and via the designers' own websites. This participant noted: *"...In my opinion sharing a fashion show online is the best"*. The same participant added: *"Yes ...it could be shown in stores and on mall screens, but via social media and designer's personal websites would be more effective."*

#### **Theme 5:** The importance of digital fashion shows to Saudi designers

Here the interviewees were asked an open-ended question: "Do you think that the digital fashion show would help Saudi designers to promote their collections and reach their target market?"

This question sought to probe the participant's attitudes and determine to what extent fashion shows are important to Saudi designers.

The results from this theme revealed that the majority of respondents believe that a digital fashion show could be of great importance to their fashion careers. The consensus on the importance of fashion shows to designers arose from the role played by the fashion show in the advancement of this industry, and the attendant growth of the fashion market. Moreover, it was thought that this might help Saudi designers promote their collections and reach their target audience.

Two of interviewees described how a digital fashion show would help them reach their audience; noting that the media makes it possible for the consumer to visualize the appearance of clothes when work. One interviewee applauded the idea, saying: *"...It is a*

*creative idea especially if presented via social media". A further participant expressed similar views after watching the display video: "...the way that you show the video seems like an easy and affordable way to effectively create fashion show."*

Another participant commented on the similarities between a live fashion show and a digital fashion show, highlighting the dresses worn by the models, and noting that both the digital and live fashion show helps Saudi designers to promote their collections and reach their target market. A further participant added:

*"... yes, people have come to see the clothing worn by other people. This gives them an idea of what they will look like when they wear the clothes. This is the same idea as shopping online, where most of the clothes are worn by a model."*

#### **Theme 6:** Suggestions to improve the digital fashion show

The outcome of this theme specifies four suggestions that can be put in place to improve the digital fashion show according to some fashion designers who participated in the focus group. These suggestions were:

- Use a professional model to show the clothes more effectively;
- Ensure that the appearance of the model be modest and acceptable;
- Use hats to cover the faces of models in order to focus attention on the clothes.
- When displaying shorter dresses, the models should wear long boots, or tights.

Furthermore, some of the interviewees in the focus group emphasized the importance of covering the body of the model with a looser bodysuit, noting that the garment should not reveal the body's features and curves, especially if the target audience is a mixed gender one.

#### **8.4.4 Conclusion of the Digital Fashion Show Evaluation**

To conclude the results from evaluating the digital form of fashion shows proposed as an outcome of implementation the framework, it has been found that there was an acceptance from all the groups that the digital fashion show is an acceptable form to

replace the traditional fashion show with, because it aligns with culture and religious considerations. Also, it helps consumers and industry buyers to choose garments as it shows the garments as it is worn in real life such as traditional fashion shows. Fashion designers highlighted that this helps to present garments without requiring any license for it, in comparison to traditional fashion shows which require a licence.

In terms of the model's appearance, there was an acceptability toward the model's appearance if they were wearing modest clothes, long loose dresses which do not show the figure, and covers her hair with any type of covering, hijab or turban. However, one participant mentioned that the acceptability of the garments presented in Saudi Arabia is based on the city which is the digital fashion show is displayed in, as there are some cities in Saudi Arabia that are less conservative than others, which can have more acceptability toward the visualisation. For the bodysuit, most participants accept the bodysuit to cover the body. However, some consumers were hostile to the bodysuit and some fashion designers see it as it as not necessary because the Saudi society is becoming more open-minded. Also, one participant of the consumers who was more conservative did not accept the bodysuit as in his opinion it shows the figure. Therefore, it should be worn if displayed in shops or other fairly public or mixed gender areas but not if only on the internet.

As a designer point of view, they preferred to hire a professional model to display garments. Also, they preferred that the model wears head scarves with the long modest dresses and to wear other types of head covering while wearing other types of garments.

In terms of the effectiveness of the fashion show, there was an acceptance across all of the groups that it is as efficient as a live fashion show in displaying the garments. It helps to discover how the garments look and move on a person and help consumers to determine whether to buy the clothes. In addition, fashion designers commented that a digital fashion show is an excellent way to illustrate the garment's detail.

In terms of where to display this digital fashion show, there was a general agreement that this visualisation is acceptable to display on the internet through the designer's website of social media or in stores. Displaying this visualisation in public did not have

any acceptance from the majority of the participants. However, some participants find it acceptable to display it in public such as billboards. Some consumer participants showed more conservative views and suggested displaying it for a female audience only.

### **8.5 The Digital Fashion Show Guidelines**

The researcher displayed the key guidelines and studio plans (figures 7-22 and 7-23) for fashion designers who participated in the focus group, to provide a complete package explaining exactly how to make a digital fashion show. The intention behind providing a full package would be to facilitate the production of the show for non-professionals. This package describes how to put on a digital fashion show, it clarifies the procedure, presents the studio layout and mentions small details such as dimensions.

The example templates were provided to give an idea of how the staging might work, and how this can be changed according to the themes used in the fashion show. However, in some cases, the designer might change some things slightly, such as altering the camera position or adding more cameras according to the requirements for the final fashion show. The fashion designers confirmed that they can recreate the fashion show by following the stages step by step in the provided guideline. Also, it helps them to avoid any aspects which might prevent the staging of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia and find a suitable solution by using different methods such as digital techniques.

### **8.6 Framework Evaluation**

The evaluation of the framework has been by evaluating the outcomes of implementing it, the digital fashion show and the guideline. This evaluation was by cultural leaders, consumers and fashion designers, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Participants gave their feedback on the outcomes: these feedbacks prove whether the framework is applicable or need some modifications.

As a result of the evaluation, it has been proved that the framework is valid and applicable. This will help the fashion designers with their promotions and help the fashion industry to develop.

## 8.7 Summary

This chapter discussed the validation of the framework and process of evaluating the outcome of implementing the proposed framework. The evaluation was through several focus groups which included cultural leaders, to give their religious and cultural opinion toward the visualisation; consumers, to give their opinion as decision makers in buying the products; and fashion designers, as they aim to profit from selling the products.

The cultural leaders and consumers participants in the focus groups agreed that is a good idea for replacing traditional fashion show with. However, the garments presented should cover the model's body and hair. In terms of covering the body with a bodysuit, the cultural leaders' participants agreed that this is a good approach as long as it does not show body/ figure. However, the consumers focus groups have criticised the bodysuit as it is very annoying and affects the overall look of the outfit, while some of the other participants mentioned that as regards the bodysuit, its use depends on the preferences of the target audience, the colour of the body suit and the design of the clothes

The cultural leaders and consumers participants agreed that the digital fashion show is as efficient as a live fashion show. Also, the majority preferred to display the digital fashion show on the internet via social media, designer's websites and in stores, but not in public places such as in malls. Others thought that it is better to display it in women-only events. However, some of the consumers focus groups participants find it acceptable if the digital fashion show was displayed in public places, such as shopping mall, stores and billboards. Based on the responses, the consumers focus groups showed a more conservative approach than the cultural leaders.

The fashion designers focus group had almost the same responses as the cultural leaders and the consumers focus groups participants on cultural and religious requirements for the modest presentation of women. However, they had different comments from a professional point of view, preferring to use a professional model and cover the hair of the model with different types of head covering based on the outfit. In terms of the bodysuit, some thought that bodysuit is not necessary. In addition, the

majority of the fashion designers focus group participants agreed that a digital fashion show could be of great importance to their fashion careers.



# Discussion of Research Findings



## Chapter 9      Discussion of research findings

### 9.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall discussion of the significance and implications of the study.

#### 9.1.1 Islam and Clothing

Historically, the religion of Islam started in Arabia as a revelation to humanity by the “Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H)”. The Quran, the Islamic holy book, serves to be as a guide to the Islamic behaviours, morals, and beliefs. There are a variety of female behaviours expected in Islam. Women are expected to be respectful and modest. The results of the interviews with the participants affirmed that religion constituted the most significant influence on the culture of Saudi Arabia. As per the view of the interviewees, Islam has shaped gender roles as well as the representation of women. Also, because the religion and culture in Saudi Arabia are strongly bonded, being modest in terms of clothing for women in Saudi Arabia reflects a sense of belonging to the land and religion. It is a system of beliefs in the value of being modest in clothing that has transferred from generation to generation, which is part of the national identity.

The representation of women is of critical importance for the acceptability of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. As Pentecost and Andrews (2010) pointed out, the religion and culture play a noticeable role in shaping consumer behaviour in shopping or accepting an idea based on the consumer behaviour theory. On the other hand, in Western fashion, ladies are permitted to wear uncovered outfits at fashion shows (Hansen, 2004). Then again, in Islamic nations the ladies are not encouraged to wear garments that uncover their body in mixed occasions. At the fashion shows in Islamic nations, for example Indonesia or Dubai, models present modest garments.

The findings of the study reflected that women in Islam are required to follow modest fashion while their dresses should not represent their body. Islam compels women to dress in decent clothing that does not reveal the shape of their body. The finding was validated by the study performed by Renard (2014). Accordingly, the outfits

worn by women are governed by the Islamic rules and standards. To this end, the religion incorporates minimum standards for personal modesty that are reflected by distinctive styles of clothing worn by Muslims. Even though these styles are viewed as conservative or outdated by different people, they are viewed as obligatory by the Muslim. The outcomes of the framework evaluation revealed that in digital fashion shows there is no restriction on the style, fabric or colour choice when it comes to modest dressing in Islam. In contrast, there is a wide range of clothing found among Muslims that corresponds to diversity. However, these garments should be aligned with the Islamic rules, which should be loose, do not show the body/ figure and not be transparent. Short dresses are not acceptable in the visualisation because it does not align with the Islamic rules in dressing. However, wearing a bodysuit to cover the parts of the body which has not been covered by clothes, such as neck, arms and legs, is acceptable based on the opinion of the interviewed cultural leaders. The fashion shows that typically involve displaying of a model's body are forbidden by the Islamic rules, although this changes if the fashion show was displayed to a single gender audience (women) as the models do not need to be fully covered in front of other women.

In Islam, the femininity of women is given immense significance and their dressing is assumed to be one of the crucial aspects of the religion. Along these lines, Islam directs the women to wear the hijab particularly in the presence of any man except of those to whom they are married. The results indicated that women in public gatherings must obey Islamic rules in terms of dressing. Therefore, covering the model's hair in the digital fashion show is necessary. Different styles can be used such as turbans or hijab, however, this head covering should be consistent with the garment displayed.

### 9.1.2 Role of the Fashion Industry

The fashion industry plays a significant role in the economic growth of the country. Most of the respondents stated that the fashion industry is important for strengthening the economy of Saudi Arabia. Hence, the government ought to make massive investments in this sector. However, there are several barriers to the success of this sector particularly in Saudi Arabia. There is a lack of fashion designers, manufacturers,

fashion shows and advertisement. Due to this, the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia lags behind the global fashion industry. Fashion designers are trying to grow this industry by growing their business and advertising their collection and one of these methods of advertisements is fashion shows. However, they are facing many restrictions in setting up fashion shows, unlike Western counterparts, such as gaining permissions and restrictions on advertisements and female presentation in public. All of these aspects limit fashion designers from promoting via fashion shows. Therefore, a digital version of a fashion show helps fashion designers to promote their collection, as it is an important tool in fashion promotion and for their fashion career, therefore also for the growth of the fashion industry.

### 9.1.3 Significance of Digital Fashion Shows

In the view of the fact that Islam condemns fashion shows that involve displaying female bodies, digital fashion shows can be a good alternative to these shows in Saudi Arabia. In a digital fashion show, unwanted parts of the body can be modified either digitally or a bodysuit can be used to cover the body. Therefore, they do not conflict with the Islamic rules. Amrullah (2008) opined that the internet had transformed the way in which fashion designers can promote their products. It has replaced the customary system of fashion shows with digital platforms. As noted earlier, these platforms allow the fashion designers to showcase their products without the disapproval of the Islamic scholars. Similar to physical fashion shows, the appearance of models in digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia influences the acceptability of the show in terms of having some restrictions on the garments displayed. This is opposite to what is displayed on social media and in terms of the appearance of the model, in which there is no restrictions on female images. The majority of the participants of the research agreed that even in digital fashion shows, restrictions ought to be placed on the styles of clothes to be modelled. However, it has been found through the observation that fashion promoted on social media has no restriction in terms of the female presentation: it is a personal choice to the designer, but presentation is still relatively conservative to meet expected norms (section 5.4.3). It has become acceptable to view females without modest clothes on

social media but not face-to-face in real life. This is because the viewer can be selective in what they view when surfing social media.

Because the digital fashion show is displayed in Saudi Arabia, it is important for the designer to take into her/ his account that the female presentation should obey the religious and traditional rules to avoid rejection. There was strong agreement among most of the participants that designs displayed should be long, loose, not transparent and not show body features. Also, the hair should be covered with any type of head covering. However, this head covering should be consistent with the clothes shown, which means that the model wears hijab while displaying long modest garments. Displaying short dresses did not find acceptance by the majority of participants, as it does not align with the Islamic rules. Using a bodysuit to be worn under the garments was accepted by cultural leaders and some consumer groups, but others felt it was detrimental to an effective understanding of the garments, while the fashion designers felt that it was unnecessary. However, some participants thought that the bodysuit was unacceptable as they think it shows the model's features: this shows that some participants are more conservative than others. These outcomes imply that even digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia should follow the rules derived from the Quran that require women to dress in a modest manner and cover their entire body including head and hair.

#### **9.1.4 Fashion Promotion**

In Saudi Arabia, there is an extensive number of international brands spread across shopping malls. However, the advertisement and marketing of the products and services offered by these brands are regulated by several regulations produced by the Saudi Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs (2004). For example, Article number 15 prohibits the placement of an advertisement in any public area if its content as well as format is not compatible with the Islamic religion. Some of the interesting findings revealed during the observations showed that there was no female photographic imagery in the stores, most of the mannequins were headless and were covered by clothes from the chest area to the knees. In Saudi Arabia, the fashion is extensively promoted through magazines as well as other forms of print media. Although there are certain restrictions placed by the

Ministry of Rural and Municipal Affairs (2004) in terms of female representation, the designers have a greater freedom while displaying their products on websites and social media. This is particularly because no governmental rules have been introduced that are applicable to social media. Social media is viewed as a major platform that connects fashion brands with their potential consumers. Nowadays, a significant populace of the consumers uses different social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram for purchasing clothes. However, the findings of the study reflected that consumers in Saudi Arabia still prefer products from physical stores. Torres (2016) noted that consumers find greater feasibility in purchasing the desired products and services from the physical stores. By displaying the digital fashion shows in different platforms, it gives the consumers the opportunity to discover and browse the collection, either in-stores by displaying the show on screens for consumers who prefer to visit physical stores, or on the internet through the designer's website or different social media channels for those who prefer online shopping. There was a majority acceptance for displaying the digital fashion show in different platforms, in-stores and online, in the evaluation of the proposed digital fashion show by the participants (fashion designers, cultural leaders and consumers). However, there was a disapproval by some of the participants toward displaying the digital fashion show in public places such as in malls, but as a new idea applied in a certain place, it will face some rejection from some participants. Over time this will spread and become popular within the society. This has been proved with the major changes in Saudi Arabia in the recent years. Some regulations and rules have changed such as allowing women to drive and appointing women in high authority positions, etc. These changes are considered as major changes in Saudi Arabia which suggest that the theory of diffusion of innovation aligns with the research idea.

Moreover, an outcome of the survey was that the majority of the questionnaire participants prefer shopping abroad in contrast to local stores within the country. This is particularly because of the lack of fashion marketing in the country. Therefore, an increase in the number of digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, as it has been accepted by the participants in the focus groups, can potentially boost the sales of products and services from local brands and designers.

The other methods utilized by the fashion designers to promote their products and services include departmental stores and boutiques as well magazines, journals, ceremonial events, exhibitions and bloggers. The outcomes of the interview with the fashion designers shed light on the benefits and shortcomings of the social media channels for promoting products. The participants identified that social media sites are a good source of communication. This finding was in line with the viewpoint of Berthon et al. (2012), that marketing through social media platforms can lead to several benefits including brand building, relationship building, promotions and publicity. As a result, it can be considered that social media marketing puts forward quite a lot of opportunities for designers to build up and develop their businesses and brands. Another noteworthy benefit of social media highlighted in this particular research is its ease of use. It allows the designers to display their products without any difficulties. In a similar manner, consumers can view the products of their favourite designers on social media. There are also certain shortcomings of these online platforms. Therefore, fashion designers would benefit from marketing their products on social media and their website by using digital fashion shows.

#### **9.1.5 Fashion Shows and the Fashion Industry in Saudi Arabia**

Despite the fact that fashion shows are considered as an efficient platform through which the designers and brands can promote their product, they are still not common in Saudi Arabia. In the viewpoint of Hanna (2011), fashion shows create a link between the consumers and fashion designers; hence, in spite of the high cost involved, they are crucial for the fashion designers. In Saudi Arabia, numerous Islamic scholars have criticised fashion shows and discouraged people from attending them. Trenwith (2015) reported that the Saudi Council of Chambers have banned fashion shows in the light of strict rules governing the public appearance of females. However, fashion designers organise fashion shows on an annual or seasonal basis. Similarly, Khan (2013) pointed out that the majority of fashion designers promote their latest collections in exhibitions that are held on an annual basis. Furthermore, Eissa (2009) cited the existence of a show at the culmination of a competition among Saudi designers and that other fashion shows

are held as part of charity activities, while yet others are approved under names such as 'bazaars'. However, they still face the risk of being shut down by the police.

Even though the frequency of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia is low when compared to other regions, they are essential for the business of fashion designers. Kietzmann et al. (2011) noted that the fashion show is a means through which the designer can disseminate their ideas, generate brand awareness, get coverage in the media and a predisposition of the public to his signature style. In the viewpoint of Marshall (2010), the fashion show is an essential tool for the modernization of the industry. This can be seen in the fact that during the last decade there has been a growth of organizations of fashion weeks and fashion shows around the world. The standpoints of the past researchers and the findings of the study validate the importance of fashion shows for the business and profitability of fashion brands.

However, in Saudi Arabia, there are several barriers to the execution of fashion shows. Some of the potential barriers include licenses, customs and traditions and fear of the new. In addition, customs and traditions were considered by the interviewees to be among the barriers to holding fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. Most of the Islamic scholars perceive that the clothing displayed in the fashion shows fails to meet the Islamic requirements. An additional obstacle to holding fashion shows in Saudi Arabia was claimed by the interviewees to be the fear of the new, specifically with respect to a few elements of society.

Due to the preceding aspects, the fashion designers are not satisfied with the present fashion show practices in the country. In their opinion, there are not sufficient components available for the success of fashion shows. However, the participants in the focus groups agreed that the digital fashion show fills the gap left by the lack of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. This is because the digital fashion show gives the consumer an idea about how the garment will look like when worn, as it is an effective way to present garments and helps to encourage consumers and industry buyers to purchase the garment. This helps to grow the designer's business and the industry. It is important to facilitate fashion shows in Saudi Arabia to grow the industry as the interview respondents

said that there is a strong relationship between the fashion shows and the fashion industry. According to them, the association between fashion shows and the fashion industry has a strong impact on the individual, on society and on the country's economy.

## **9.2 Conclusion**

In order to test the framework, it was crucial to evaluate the outcomes of the framework, the digital visualization and the guidelines. The evaluation took the form of focus groups consisting of consumers, cultural leader's figures and fashion designers.

Based on the results of the evaluation, it was agreed that the digital format of the proposed fashion show serves as a realistic substitute to traditional live fashion shows in the Saudi context and fills in the gap created by the impossibility of staging live fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. It was further agreed that these types of shows are acceptable to watch on screen. Also, this type of show serves the intended purpose of enabling customers to choose clothes and visualize how they will look, as well as explaining how to wear the garments.

Regarding the pieces displayed in the visualisation, the long modest and non-see through dresses were considered more acceptable as the show will be watched by males. It was also suggested that the show display only loose bodysuits and garments that avoiding showing female curves. A bodysuit was acknowledged by some of the participants to provide an acceptable optical illusion while also ensuring the body is covered. It was found that showing the video in stores and on social media (to be viewed on tablets or in digital catalogues) was the preferred location for the majority of participants.

The fashion designers' views mirror those of consumers and the cultural leaders in suggesting that not covering the hair and wearing shorter and tighter dresses is currently unacceptable for a Saudi audience.





# Conclusion and Recommendations

### Chapter 10 Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 10.1 Introduction

This final chapter discusses: (1) the main research findings; (2) responses to the aim, objectives and research questions; (3) the research limitations; (4) the contribution to knowledge; and (4) key recommendations.

#### 10.2 Research Summary

This research established that the concept of fashion is currently a social, cultural and economic phenomenon that exceeds the importance of the garments themselves. Where fashion once served as a function of social regulation (i.e. specific garments indicated an individual's region of habitation as well as their social position), this is, to a large extent, no longer the case. The advent of a globalised international market, along with advertising campaigns and mass consumption, has led to the impact of fashion becoming immediate, as well as the creation of a huge fashion industry, including designers and manufacturers. Fashion has thus become a series of interconnected practices, including: (1) markets; (2) economics; (3) technological developments; and (4) a series of cultural practices, i.e. marketing and design. Fashion can thus be viewed as a concept that has now far surpassed trends and the need for clothing, to be understood as an attitude and a disposition of the senses in all areas, not just in relation to aesthetics or costume.

Over the previous three decades, the World Wide Web, email and social media have become the primary system of global communication, changing how users communicate between themselves and with companies, including the sharing of all types of information across different platforms. The influence of social networks has become increasingly important, due to their ability to establish a company's unique image. Interaction with the public is crucial when it comes to fashion, since this allows customers to become actively involved with a brand, as well as facilitating the creation of brand ambassadors. The rise of digital technology has transformed the promotion of fashion brands, with social networks having become a platform that has radically changed communication in

the sector. Brands are now (regardless of their position within the fashion market) viewed on social networks, with Facebook, Instagram and Twitter employed to promote products and fashion companies, and (most importantly) to establish relationships and create communities of followers. The bidirectional and immediacy of social networks are highly valuable to fashion brands, including their potential for using analytics to enable a brand to gather information regarding its audience and practice micro-segmentation. The digital environment enables the creation of spaces allowing the general public to communicate with organisations, including commenting and sharing information. In order to utilise this aspect in an effective manner, brands wishing to connect with their consumers must understand the multiple devices and platforms they use to communicate and the types of messages to which they react.

An analysis of the communication of fashion brands within the digital field through the Observation and interviews of fashion designers has been undertaken in this thesis from various different points of view, including the use of social media by organisations, and new formats of communication established in response to the characteristics of different digital environments and social networks, i.e. Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.

Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East and thus represents many contextual differences and a rich array of lifestyles. Its consumption of fashion products has increased significantly over previous years, while middle-class consumers have become highly conscious of global fashion brands. Islamic rules and regulations govern business operations in the country, along with other aspects of life. This includes the obligation, according to Islamic traditions and values, for women to wear abayas. Nevertheless, globalisation and Western ideas have had some influence on the cultural values of the country.

Saudi Arabia is considered the main hub of the Middle East and thus a potential market within the region for the fashion industry. The unmatched purchasing power of these consumers, along with the high proportion of young adults among the population, appeals to the global fashion industry. This industry has recently made significant progress in the country, despite a number of restrictions placed on women's dress by

Islamic traditions. This progress has been particularly in response to the large number of international and local fashion brands now sold in shopping malls, as well as the emergence of online Islamic fashion stores. However, although fashion shows are considered an efficient platform for international and local brands to promote their products and services, they are more significant than simply being marketing and advertising tools for designers, particularly as models are understood to display their bodies and walk in a seductive manner. Islamic rules forbid the watching of such shows, due to the issue of the representation of females in public, and the need to dress in garments that do not display their bodies. Thus, the Islamic religion can be seen as exerting the greatest influence on Saudi Arabian culture, and in particular the representation of women in public and how both genders are represented when they are in the same place, resulting in gender segregation.

The fashion industry has played a critical role in the recent economic growth of Saudi Arabia (section 3.7). This places an obligation on the government to make significant investment in the growth and development of the fashion industry, as part of the move to lessen the country's reliance on the oil and gas sector. The findings of this current study revealed that the Saudi fashion industry suffers from a lack of publicity and use of fashion shows, causing it to lag behind the global fashion sector. In addition, the designers and organisers of fashion shows face criticism from Islamic scholars, who are of the opinion that conventional fashion shows fail to comply with Islamic rules and regulations. Furthermore, the majority of the Saudis tend not to attend these shows, primarily due to the conservative mind-set of the country and the rules governing the appearance of females.

Fashion shows are conducted worldwide but not in Saudi Arabia. The presentation of collections varies from one designer to another, while the shows themselves are vital for both the designer and the clothing market as a means of promoting designs and brands. Although the setting up of a fashion show is relatively expensive, they remain important for fashion designers. Firstly, they are attended by buyers who purchase clothes to be sold in their stores, and secondly, the attendance of the press can advertise

the collection, including in printed media (i.e. magazines) or on television. The lack of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia has had a negative impact on the growth of the fashion industry (section 5.6.4.2), which, in turn, compromises the growth of Saudi investment, causing the country to lag behind the global fashion industry. In addition, fashion designers lack opportunities to present their collections to buyers to ensure their garments are sold in stores. Therefore, the fashion industry is currently restricting the sales and profitability of designers, who have become dissatisfied and are now looking to pursue other avenues, i.e. alternative markets for their products.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow et al., 1987) states that individuals tend to seek satisfaction relative to their perceived actual needs, including the desire to experience a feeling of belonging. Saudi consumers therefore aspire to buy Western garments due to being exposed to these designs by means of the Internet, or by travelling to Western countries. Therefore, fashion designers now attempt to meet consumer demand by designing garments capable of competing with these Western brands. However, at the same time, these fashion designers face a large number of restrictions when promoting their designs in Saudi Arabia. This results in designers experiencing a lack of support in their home country, and thus preferring to present their collections overseas, where they can promote their collections without any restriction. This results in such designers developing a greater sense of belonging to this new market, rather than continuing the struggle to overcome the limitations of their local market. This development therefore also inhibits the growth of the Saudi fashion market.

Although this study revealed the difficulties faced by physical fashion shows in Saudi Arabia (section 5.6.3), it also found that the Saudi population readily accepts the concept of a digital fashion show (section 8.4.2). Nevertheless, the latter remains subject to the same cultural restrictions regarding the display of clothing, i.e. the concept of digital fashion shows is acceptable to the Saudi community if the model wears modest clothing (section 8.4). Digital fashion shows can offer numerous benefits to the Saudi fashion industry, particularly due to the variety of technological tools available to contemporary fashion designers and merchants in shaping the presentation of such shows.

This study also identified the rapid increase in designers' use of social media for promotion (section 5.6.1). Some mature and well-known fashion brands have recognised that the most effective method of keeping up with a changing industry is to employ a specialist team to implement their social media strategy. This demonstrates the importance of social media applications for achieving market success. Since social media are viewed as new media, they are increasingly treated as the catalysts for changing the operating model of brands. Social media has now also attracted the attention of designers in Saudi Arabia, particularly due to allowing greater freedom in displaying products to consumers. This arises from the current lack of governmental restrictions on social media imagery, although it should be recognised that this may change in future.

Thus, customers have now begun to use Instagram to buy clothes, contacting the designer or seller by means of direct messages. However, a negative aspect of this approach is the general inability to claim a refund if the purchaser dislikes the product once it arrives. Nevertheless, the findings of this study demonstrated that the lack of government censorship of images on social media enables fashion designers to select their means of female representation in the promotion of their designs (section 5.6.2), i.e. to use either a mannequin or a female model. The research therefore demonstrated that the majority of fashion designers in Saudi Arabia tend to employ social media platforms (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp) to promote their products to their target market, alongside department stores or their own shops, public events and television.

The findings of this study also revealed that social media is utilised extensively by fashion designers in Saudi Arabia to promote their products and services (section 5.6.1). This revealed that social media accords designers in Saudi Arabia with alternative means of advertising and selling their collections. However, in reality, they tend to use simple imagery, lacking the sophisticated tools employed by Western brands. Therefore, this current study identified significant challenges and ambiguities regarding the promotion of Saudi fashion, due to the differences between rules and reality, including the application of rules according to the desired nature and level of customer interaction.

The research findings indicated that the majority of Saudi shoppers tend to look for clothing in stores, and principally shop abroad (section 5.5.2). This may be due to various factors, including the wide range of products available abroad in contrast to those found in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, buying from different markets enables consumers to dress in a unique style, as a result of their ability to select pieces unavailable in the Saudi market. This behaviour is also used to highlight wealth and social status, thereby satisfying consumers' material and social needs. All of these behaviours and practices indicate that conspicuous consumption theory also applies to Saudi consumer behaviour.

In addition, the majority of the respondents agreed that a digital fashion show is a suitable method of using real-life models in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, and that such shows have the ability to increase in-store clothes purchasing, despite the need to adhere to the limitations regarding the kind of garments displayed (section 5.5.4).

This thesis demonstrated that, when it comes to the incidence and frequency of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, they tend to be organised on an annual or seasonal basis. Furthermore, it highlighted various barriers to the organisation of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia, including licensing and various customs and traditions prohibiting the holding of fashion shows (section 5.6.3.4). This study found that the respondents approved the proposal for the use of digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. However, due to the continued influence of the Islamic religion within the country, the respondents also confirmed that such shows should adhere to Islamic rules in terms of female representation and the garments displayed. The study also identified that the presentation of a digital fashion show on a television or computer screen would not conflict with Islamic rules.

When it came to female representation in the context of a digital fashion show, this study found that the respondents preferred the use of a silhouette to display a garment (section 5.2.1.4). However, some modifications were suggested to give more acceptable realistic representation for female in the digital fashion show, as later results showed a preference for more realistic representation.

Although the model's facial features should be shown, their hair should remain covered (section 5.5.5). At the same time, it was important for the model to appear decorous in the garments displayed, through wearing modest, loose clothes that neither reveals the body's features nor is made from transparent fabric. Furthermore, they agreed that a full bodysuit should be worn beneath the garments, in order to avoid representing the model's skin (section 5.7). However, some respondents preferred to have a looser bodysuit (sections 8.4.1, 8.4.2 and 8.4.3).

This study proposed a framework for creating visualizations for digital fashion shows, in order to employ technology to facilitate the staging of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia. This, as noted above, was due to Saudi regulations prohibiting physical fashion shows, even those that are women-only events. In addition, this framework is intended to support emerging fashion designers, who lack the means to set up a traditional fashion show. It could also be used on different platforms to present the garments to the viewer, i.e. online (through social media or personal websites) or on screens placed in stores. The framework was created with systematic steps capable of being easily followed to create the visualisation. At the same time, it took into account the opinions of stakeholders, in order to ensure the most appropriate female presentation, preventing the visualisation from being rejected for religious or cultural reasons.

Following the implementation of the framework, this study undertook an evaluation of the outcome, in order to confirm the participants' acceptance of this visualisation. They deemed the framework to be applicable for a number of different countries (i.e. not only Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries), although they noted that some aspects would need to be modified in accordance with each time and location. Thus, countries that have no restrictions on female presentation would require different framework outcomes from those sensitive to how women are presented. Thus, this study demonstrated that the framework has the potential to: firstly, assist with the development of a visualisation to facilitate the effective promotion of products by means of technology and secondly, to assist fashion designers with the provision of guidelines for creating a visualisation acceptable to Saudi culture.



### 10.3 Achieving the Research Aim and Objectives and Answering the Research Questions

The main aim of this research was to provide a solution for fashion designers to promote their designs effectively in order to increase the distribution of their designs to increase market exposure within Saudi Arabia. This was fulfilled, with the design outcome of the digital fashion show, as well as the conceptual framework and guidelines, validated by the consumer focus groups, cultural leaders group and fashion designers group.

The research objectives successfully explored the acceptability of using a digital fashion show as an alternative to traditional fashion shows in a sensitive environment, i.e. that of Saudi Arabia, as follows:

1. To determine the social and cultural factors influencing fashion promotion in Saudi Arabia.
2. To navigate the cultural norms to create digital visualisations to support fashion promotion in Saudi Arabia.

The responses from the cultural leaders interviewed revealed that Islamic rules were considered the greatest influencer on life in Saudi Arabia.

The cultural leaders expressed no objection to the concept of a digital fashion show, providing that the models were dressed in clothing that did not reveal, or cling to, their bodies, and that their hair remained covered, i.e. in accordance with the Arab community preferring fashion that combines good designs with modesty.

The majority of the cultural leaders agreed to the showing of fashion shows on a screen (i.e. a television or screen located in a store) in place of a live event, again provided that the clothing displayed remains modest. On the other hand, one cultural leader considered fashion shows to constitute a sin, and thus unacceptable in any form apart from an animated model (see Section 5.3)

The consumer questionnaire (see Section 5.5) revealed that the majority of respondents agreed that a digital fashion was an effective method of replacing live

models, but it should be in line with the Islamic rules and culture in terms of female presentation, in which the model should be cover her whole body except the face and feet. Also, the garments she wears should not show her figure. In addition, this research identified that the Saudi community would find digital fashion shows highly acceptable, resulting in such shows being in high demand.

3. To establish acceptable means of female presentation in promotion through the use of interviews, observation and a questionnaire.

The responses of the cultural leaders (Section 5.3.1.3) revealed that the model's appearance should conform to that acceptable in Islamic rules. Thus, a garment should not reveal the outline of the body, resulting in a need for garments that are long and loose and lack any form of transparency. In addition, the model should cover her hair, and not wear anything that draws attention, i.e. a mask or makeup.

Consumers agreed with the view that the acceptance of digital fashion shows would be determined by the models' appearance, and therefore the existing restrictions must be applied to the garments displayed. Furthermore, in the phase 2 questionnaire, consumers expressed a preference to long dresses, while any showing of short dresses should include covering the body (i.e. with a bodysuit), so as not to show the skin (see Section 5. 5).

The cultural leaders also expressed a preference for showing the models' facial features, as any covering (i.e. by blurring or the use of a mask) would appear unnatural. Therefore, it was considered preferable to show the face in a natural condition, i.e. without any makeup. However, the responses to the questionnaire with consumers 1 (see Section 5.5) showed that the majority of the participants considered that the model's facial features (eyes, nose, etc.) should be exposed clearly and strongly rejected the images of models that did not show the facial features. Thus, their opinion was compatible that of the cultural leaders.

The observation for this research revealed that mannequins in Saudi stores are headless (see Section 5.4.1). However, consumers rejected the idea of a headless model in the questionnaire (see Section 5.5.5).

The research identified no restrictions in terms of female presentation when it comes to social media (see Section 5.4.3), but that censorship is in place for printed media (see Section 5.4.2).

4. To identify a simple method to produce a digital fashion show which does not require the intervention of technological specialists.
5. To develop digital visualisations and undertake pilot testing.

This research created a digital visualisation in accordance with the findings of Chapter 5, which employed a mixed method strategy of data collection to collect data. This visualisation followed the findings from the data collection phase (see chapters 5 and 6) and the literature review (see Chapter 2). The data was triangulated, in order to facilitate the formation of the research framework, which led to the creation of the digital visualisation. This framework can be applied on any visual idea related to fashion and advertisements. This can improve the visualisation in the fashion industry. The outcome of implementing the framework can vary based on the time and location which it has been applied into. This was then evaluated and validated by means of focus groups made up of consumers, cultural leaders and fashion designers (see Chapter 8).

6. To develop guidelines to enable Saudi fashion designers to set up culturally acceptable visualisations.

The creation and testing of the digital visualisation has led to the development of guidelines, studio plans and a background template. These were subsequently combined into a complete package, giving step-by-step details of how to create a digital fashion show following Islamic rules and thus being culturally acceptable in Saudi Arabia (see Section 8.4.3).

7. To examine the various formats of a virtual fashion show, establishing usability and limitations.

The researcher tested various software packages, in order to identify the most effective platform in terms of: (1) cost; (2) production values; and (3) ease of use. In addition, the researcher tested a number of different technologies, i.e. holograms, animation and three-dimensional movies. Chroma keying was chosen for implementing the framework, due to this being in widespread usage within the media industry, along with being easy to use and modify digitally, as discussed in detail in Section 7.4.4

The current researcher is confident that this aspect has been successfully fulfilled through the collection and analysis of the research primary data, followed by the creation and implementation of the framework and the evaluation of the outcomes of this implementation.

8. To identify the obstacles fashion designers face which prevent promotion of their designs in Saudi Arabia.

The researcher identified some obstacles fashion designers are facing which prevent them from promoting their designs easily. These obstacles include the ability to obtain a license and the need to conform to customs and traditions (section 5.6.3.4). Also, fashion designers are given fewer opportunities to display their clothes (section 6.2.5) and if they present a live fashion show, they have a risk of it being shut down by the police.

The research questions have also been answered to meet the research aim:

- What are the aspects which help the acceptance of a digital fashion show?
- Could a digitalised form of fashion show be acceptable in Saudi Arabia?
- How can a digital fashion show be created in a manner that makes it acceptable for public showing in Saudi Arabia, whilst aligned with religion, traditions and customs?
- What is the acceptable female presentation via digital media in public in Saudi Arabia?

These questions were answered by collating information from the interviews with the cultural leaders with the results of the consumer questionnaire and fashion designers' interviews, in order to assess their views of acceptable female presentation in accordance

with Islamic rules and cultural aspects (see Chapter 5). This also included an evaluation of the outcome of the framework, i.e. the digital fashion show, with focus groups considering the issue, in relation to a variety of styles of dress in the fashion show.

This research found that the acceptance of the digital fashion show was dependent on the visualisation's conformity to Saudi religion, customs and traditions, in terms of both the appearance of the female models and the clothes displayed. The findings identified that a model should be presented in a modest manner, including: (1) the use of decorous garments (i.e. designed to be loose and obscure the body's features); (2) long dresses (i.e. covering the entire body); (3) the lack of any of transparent fabric; (4) ensuring the model's hair is obscured by head coverings (i.e. headscarf or turbans); and (5) covering the body with a body suit. The application of these rules for the models created for this visualisation will thus ensure its acceptance and prevent it from being rejected.

- Would a digital fashion show help the promotion of fashion in the Saudi market?
- Would providing digital fashion show guidelines help fashion designers create a digital fashion show?

This question was answered by means of the information gathered by interviewing fashion designers (see Section 5.6) and evaluating the guidelines drawn up as the outcome of the implementation of the framework (see Section 8.4.1). The fashion designers confirmed that the guidelines would help them to create a digital fashion show by: (1) being able to follow the stages in a step by step manner; (2) helping them consider the main aspects preventing the staging of traditional fashion shows in Saudi Arabia; and (3) enabling them to identify suitable solutions using digital techniques. They further stated that the guidelines would allow them to align with the rules and regulations of Saudi Arabia in terms of female presentation, along with being able to use a low-cost solution that was easy to apply and effective in relation to the presentation of garments.

### **10.4 Research Limitations**

This research focused on a number of aspects determining both culturally and religiously acceptable presentations of women. During the research, the researcher encountered several difficulties, including:

- A lack of sources of information in Saudi Arabia, particularly in relation to clearly set out rules and regulations describing regulated or non-regulated activity.
- Differences in regulations relating to physical and online images of women.
- A lack of articles and sources of information concerning fashion practices in Saudi Arabia.
- Difficulties experienced by the researcher in interviewing fashion designers and cultural leaders for the purposes of this research.
- A lack of response, or a refusal to participate, from some of the proposed cultural leader interviewees.
- As the research related to Saudi Arabia, the researcher needed to travel there to collect the data.
- Difficulties translating between English and Arabic, which influenced both the collection and reporting of data.

### **10.5 Contribution to Knowledge**

This study has provided a new framework for the creation of digital fashion shows, based on the data identifying the different factors impacting on the visualisation. In the current context, these aspects are primarily related to religion, culture and technology. However, these could be changed according to the place and time in which the framework is applied. Therefore, the implementation of the framework can be considered a practical and effective solution for any new environment. It is intended that the framework should be used by fashion designers as a research and development tool, while also ensuring that the final visualisations meet public acceptability in various activities, i.e. the advertising of fashion.

- The framework established an acceptable means of female presentation in promotion, including compliance with the necessary rules and regulations. Digital amendments in printed magazines can change the design of a garment, resulting in a negative reaction from consumers and thus a subsequent loss of interest. This framework gives a practical solution, without any need for the digital alteration of the garments filmed in the visualisation, so enabling the presentation to remain true to the original design, while simultaneously taking into account customs and religious requirements relating to female presentation.
- During the collection of the data, the researcher identified the most acceptable female representation currently displayed on screens in public places throughout Saudi Arabia, which was subsequently confirmed by the cultural leaders, fashion designers and consumers. However, it was challenging for the researcher to define this presentation, due to the complexity of Saudi customs and practices. Most of the written rules and regulations were found to be unclear, while some official documents were confidential. In addition, a number of differences were found regarding female presentation when it came to different platforms, i.e. printed media (such as magazines), in which models' bodies are digitally modified, and online media (such as designers' websites or online magazines), for which there is no censorship regarding female presentation. It was therefore relevant to establish the 'fine line' of acceptability and create a methodology that effectively engaged all stakeholders.
- The study explored the interconnection between religion, culture and technology, and explored an acceptable female presentation in digital fashion shows. Some rules regarding the presentation of women differ when they are online or in real life. On social media, females can dress in any type of garments and are not forced to cover their hair. This is unlike the requirement of everyday life in Saudi Arabia, where a woman is required to present a modest appearance in public, i.e. covering her hair and wearing loosely-fitting clothes. This is due to the existence of fewer restrictions on social media images, thus affording greater freedom when it comes to female presentation. Exposure to the Internet has led to an

acceptance of women appearing without wearing modest garments on screens, as being separate from her appearance in everyday life. This thus also demonstrates the power of technology and how it is challenging both religion and culture.

- This study has proposed a guideline for fashion designers, to enable them to create a successful digital fashion show, including the use of a step-by-step process which can be easily imitated and potentially offered as a service to upcoming designers in the process of developing a new business.
- This research has demonstrated that a digital fashion show could assist fashion designers to present their creative collections in a low-cost manner, using videos and various digital platforms, thus enabling them to promote their designs in Saudi Arabia. This demonstrated the digital fashion show as being a practical, affordable, easy and effective solution to the need to grow the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia.
- This research tested a number of different suitable, affordable and easy to use software and technologies capable of creating a culturally and religiously acceptable visualisation. The outcome of implementing the framework resulted in the creation of a digital fashion show, which the researcher considers to constitute a foundation for the creation of fashion shows which can be used for non-Saudi or non-Islamic applications.

### 10.6 Recommendations for Future Research

The recommendations for future work arising from this research are as follows:

- Researchers are recommended to revisit the framework in future, due to the changes occurring in Saudi Arabia and to compare the results from this current research with the outcomes of the new implementation.
- Researchers are recommended to further push the boundaries when it comes to the representation of women in Saudi Arabia, in order to find the changes in the Saudi culture and customs.



- Researchers are recommended to explore different technologies, in order to create more advanced and realistic visualisations, particularly in relation to fashion shows.
- Researchers are recommended to consider the potential for the use of immersive environments in creating a digital fashion show, including the acceptance of consumers.
- Researchers are recommended to apply this study in different regions of Saudi Arabia by testing the different female presentations and compare it with the results of this research.
- Researchers are recommended to conduct this study in reference to Western brands popular in Saudi Arabia by applying the framework on their visual promotion and measure differences in sales.
- Researchers are recommended to conduct similar studies in other Islamic countries.



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# Appendix

Chapter 12 Appendix

## 12.1 Appendix A: Ethical Approval Form

 <b>DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY</b> LEICESTER	<b>Faculty of Art, Design &amp; Humanities</b> <b>Application to Gain Ethical Approval</b> <b>for Research Activities</b>		For official use Tracking No: Date approved: Initials:

All Research Degree Projects require ethical approval. Research Students in the Faculty of Art, Design and Humanities should complete this form to gain Internal Human Research Ethical Approval in consultation with their supervisors and submit it to the Faculty Assessor with their 'Application to Register for a Research Degree form (RDC:R).

Final year students undertaking a major project should also complete this form.

**NOTE:** If your research involves using human tissue or fluid samples or animals please DO NOT use this application form. You should seek guidance from the Chair of the Faculty Human Research Ethics Committee before starting the project.

<b>1. Applicant</b>													
Last Name: Sabbahi	First Name: Basma												
DMU Email Address: P12049168@myemail.dmu.ac.uk													
School: Arts and design													
<p>If you answer any of the following questions with 'Yes', then specific ethical issues WILL be raised that MUST be addressed. You will need to explain in detail in section 3 how you will address these ethical issues.</p> <p>Has your research proposal identified any of the following research procedures?</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Gathering information from or about human beings through: Interviewing, Surveying, Questionnaires</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Yes / No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Observation of human behaviour</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Yes / No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Using archived data in which individuals are identifiable</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Yes / No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Researching into illegal activities, activities at the margins of the law</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Yes / No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Researching into activities that have a risk of personal injury</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Yes / No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supporting innovation that might impact on human behaviour e.g. Behavioural Studies</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Yes / No</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>If you answered NO to ALL the questions you do not need ethical approval, please complete Section 5</b></p> <p>Are there other additional factors that could/will give rise to ethical concerns e.g. communication difficulties?</p> <p>Religious and moral issue, because it's a tradition Muslim culture some people may decide to withdraw from the study. Withdraw will be available within a certain time period detailed in the consent form.          The final fashion show will be created based on feedback collected from the cultural leaders opinions collated from the interviews to avoid offending cultural norms</p>		Gathering information from or about human beings through: Interviewing, Surveying, Questionnaires	Yes / No	Observation of human behaviour	Yes / No	Using archived data in which individuals are identifiable	Yes / No	Researching into illegal activities, activities at the margins of the law	Yes / No	Researching into activities that have a risk of personal injury	Yes / No	Supporting innovation that might impact on human behaviour e.g. Behavioural Studies	Yes / No
Gathering information from or about human beings through: Interviewing, Surveying, Questionnaires	Yes / No												
Observation of human behaviour	Yes / No												
Using archived data in which individuals are identifiable	Yes / No												
Researching into illegal activities, activities at the margins of the law	Yes / No												
Researching into activities that have a risk of personal injury	Yes / No												
Supporting innovation that might impact on human behaviour e.g. Behavioural Studies	Yes / No												

<b>2. Ethical Issues identified</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection via fashion promotion observation, personal interviews, questionnaires and focus groups.</li> <li>Secure storage of data.</li> <li>Anonymity of responses for the questionnaire / focus groups.</li> <li>Provide research tools in English and Arabic.</li> <li>Confidentiality of the participant except where prior signed permission guaranteed.</li> <li>Right to withdraw.</li> <li>Participants understanding the objectives and the outcome of the study.</li> <li>Voluntary participation.</li> <li>To avoid offending cultural/ religious protocols.</li> </ul>
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**3. How these issues will be addressed:**

- All original data will be securely saved and locked away compliance with DMU protocols and the 1998 data protection Act (encrypted memory stick).
- All data will be destroyed 6 months after finishing the research
- Where appropriate dual language version research tools will be provided
- Signed consent forms will be developed for each part of the research and will include details of the study
- Participants will be given the right to withdraw within a certain time period.
- Participation will be voluntary. Respondents recruited by email, social media, telephone or face-to-face
- Where recording equipment is used participants will agree to this in advance.
- To develop research tools which are sensitive to culture and religious protocols.

*Note: You should consider the following:*

- *Providing participants with full details of the objectives of the research*
- *Providing information appropriate for those whose first language is not English*
- *Voluntary participation with informed consent*
- *Written description of involvement*
- *Freedom to withdraw*
- *Keeping appropriate records*
- *Signed acknowledgement and understanding by participants*
- *Relevant codes of conduct/guidelines*

**4. To which ethical codes of conduct have you referred?**

Applying the university standard code of ethics on the research.

see <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/research/ethics-and-governance/research-integrity-and-ethics.aspx>

List of accompanying documentation that MUST be submitted to support the application:

- Details of the arrangements for participation in the research by human subjects (including how participants will be recruited, confidentiality procedures, copies of consent forms, any questionnaires that will be used and other documentation as appropriate)
- A copy of all the documentation provided to the volunteer to ensure the clarity of information provided
- Copies of appropriate other ethical committee permissions (internal or external) or supporting documentation
- Other documentation as advised necessary by Supervisory team
- A copy of the research proposal (Application for Registration (RDC:R) form) if appropriate

Please return to Christine Richards, CL0.08 ADHResearch&innovation@dmu.ac.uk

## 5. AUTHORISATION:

## Signature by Applicant

I declare that I have considered the ethical implications of my research

I understand that I must not undertake any research activity until this form is approved

Signed



Date

2.12.15

Name of Student Basma Sabbahi

## Signature by First Supervisor

I declare that the student named above will be working under my supervision and that ethical approval has been sought where necessary. I understand that I hold legal accountability for the ethical acceptability of the work carried out by the student

Signed



Date

2.12.15

Name of Supervisor DR CLAIRE ORWIN

## Conditional Approval - Authorising Signature (FHREC Chair)

Signed

Date

Tick here if approval is conditional ☐*Note to applicant: If you receive conditional approval, you may proceed with preparing the project but you must NOT start data collection unless you have met the conditions and received full approval.*

## Conditions:

None

## Full Approval - Authorising Signature (FHREC Chair)

Signed



Date

20 April 2016

This application has been accepted on the old form since it is a resubmission of a previous application.  
All future applications must be on the up-to-date form.

## 12.2 Appendix B: Cultural leaders Interview Questions

An Investigation on the Practicability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows

Dear Participant

My name is Basma Sabbahi. I am a Ph.D. student at the De Montfort University in Leicester, UK. My research is based on creating a digital fashion show and measure the Saudi society's satisfaction toward it, to enable us to gain a clearer understanding of cultural, religious, social aspects toward the presentation of fashion in Saudi Arabia. I would be very grateful if you would participate in the data collection for a study on "An Investigation on the Practicability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows".

We hope to better understand the following issues:

- To what extent will digital fashion shows be accepted within the Middle East market?
- What are the social or cultural issues that would hamper the use of digital fashion shows and models in the Middle East?
- To what extent consumers will engage digital models that will replace real models.
- To what extent will social or cultural factors prevent the middle eastern market/ consumer and fashion designer from successfully adopting digital fashion shows and digital models?

The information you provide is confidential, and any quotes used will be anonymized. The information gained from this questionnaire\interview will only be used for the above research.

Even though the study findings will be published in international conferences and journals, only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the



questionnaire/interview data itself. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

As a conservative Muslim country, we are interested in your views about creating a digital fashion show instead of real fashion shows for public and both genders.

#### Background

- What do you do currently? (Occupation)
- What previous positions have you held?
- What do you think is the biggest cultural influence in Saudi Arabia? And why?  
(For example: Tribalism/ religion/ tradition/ custom/ background)
- How do these influences the presentation of women in Saudi Arabia?
- 

#### Fashion show

- Have you ever attended a fashion show before? If not why?
- If yes what are the advantages and disadvantages of the fashion show?
- If yes where did you attend the fashion show?
- Did the fashion show, which you attended, have only a female or mixed gender audience?
- Would you accept an invitation to attend a mixed gender audience in a fashion show? And why?
- Do you have any restrictions about a mixed gender audience at a fashion show? If so, what are those reservations?
- Do you think that the fashion industry has the right promotion in Saudi Arabia?
- Are there any promotion method fashion industry should take?

#### Static images versus moving images any why?

- What is/is not acceptable in female public appearance?

- If people are watching television in their home and they are exposed into the Internet, what is the inhibitor of making live fashion shows in Saudi Arabia in public areas such as malls?
- Is it acceptable to show a real fashion show on a screen in a public place provided that the females are wearing modest clothing? And why?
- If the fashion show was created digitally and showed in public places, a silhouette showing the garment instead of real women would it be acceptable? And why?
- Which imagery do you think is acceptable (from the images below) to show in public to a mixed gender audience in Saudi Arabia? And why not the others?



- Do you think that the fashion industry is important in order to grow the country's income? Why?
- Do you think that Saudi designers could be known worldwide? How?
- Do you think that fashion shows are important to increase sales in the Saudi markets? And why?

## 12.3 Appendix C: Fashion Designers Interview Questions

Fashion designer interview questions

أسئلة المقابلة لمصممي الأزياء

Personal Information

معلومات شخصية

Name	اسم:
What is your current job/ position / organization?	ما هو عملك / الوظيفة / المنظمة المنتسب اليها؟

Personal designs

التصاميم الشخصية

Do you work privately or within a company?	هل تعمل في مشروعك الخاص أم ضمن لشركة؟
How would you describe the style of clothing you are designing? What products do you sell?	كيف تصف نمط الملابس التي تصممها؟ ما هي المنتجات التي تقوم ببيعها.
Where do you sell your products?	أين كنت تباع المنتجات الخاصة بك؟
What is your target market? local or international	ما هي الفئة المستهدفة لمنتجاتكم؟ السوق المحلي أو الدولي
What method do you use to promote your designs?	ما هي الطريقة التي تستخدمها لإعلان التصميمات الخاصة بك؟
Did you try to promote your designs in other channels? (Social media, stores, magazines, online shopping)	هل جربت الاعلان للتصميمات الخاصة بك في القنوات الأخرى؟ (وسائل الاعلام الاجتماعية، محلات تجاريه والمجلات، والتسوق عبر الإنترنت)
If no, Why you did not use other channels? (pros and cons)	إذا لا، لماذا لم تستخدم قنوات أخرى؟ (إيجابيات وسلبيات)

<p>If Yes</p> <p>Why do you use this method to promote?</p> <p>What are pros and cons of using this / these methods?</p>	<p>إذا نعم</p> <p>لماذا تستخدم هذه الطريقة للإعلان</p> <p>• ما هي إيجابيات وسلبيات استخدام هذا / هذه الأساليب؟</p>
<p>Is there any control laws regarding advertising in social media?</p>	<p>هل توجد أي رقابة أو قوانين فيما يخص الاعلانات في وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؟</p>
<p>How does censorship in magazines images works? By magazine organizers, specific authority or designer?</p>	<p>كيف تتم عملية رقابة الصور في المجلات ؟ ادارة المجلة أو جهة حكومية أو مصمم ؟</p>
<p>Would this censorship affect the design promotion?</p> <p>How do consumers differentiate between the censorship in images in magazines and the real design?</p>	<p>هل هذه الرقابة تؤثر على التصميم ومدى تقبل الناس له؟</p> <p>هل يستطيع المستهلك ان يميز بين التغييرات في الصورة في المجلة والتصميم الاساسي؟</p>
<p>Would you be willing to share some images how do you promote your designs in this research?</p>	<p>هل تمانع بمشاركتنا في البحث بعض الصور في كيفية اعلانكم لتصاميمكم؟</p>

## Fashion Show

## عروض الأزياء

<p>On average how often, do you have fashion shows?</p>	<p>في المتوسط كيف وغالبا ما يكون لديك عروض الأزياء؟</p>
<p>Are fashion shows important to your business?</p>	<p>هل عروض الأزياء مهمة بالنسبة لعملك؟</p>
<p>What impact do the fashion shows have on your business?</p>	<p>ما هو تأثير عروض الأزياء على عملك؟</p>

Is there any specific season for fashion shows in Saudi Arabia? If yes. When? o If no. Why?	هل هناك أي موسم معين لعروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية؟ إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم. متى؟ إذا لا. لماذا؟
Do you think that the growth of fashion shows in Saudi Arabia depends on having a single gender audience type? (Male/ female) and why?	هل تعتقد أن نمو عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية تعتمد على وجود احد الجنسين كنوع الجمهور؟ (ذكر / أنثى) ولماذا؟
Do you think that a mixed gender audience in fashion shows would help the fashion industry to grow? Why?	هل تعتقد أن جمهور مختلط بين الجنسين في عروض الأزياء من شأنه أن يساعد على صناعة الأزياء في النمو؟ لماذا؟
Do fashion shows help to the fashion designer to increase sales? In what way?	هل عروض الأزياء تساعد على مصمم الأزياء لزيادة المبيعات؟ كيف؟

Fashion industry in SA

صناعة الازياء في السعوديه

How would you describe the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia?	كيف تصف صناعة الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية؟
Is there any relation between fashion shows and fashion industry in Saudi Arabia? How would you describe this relationship between them? Do you think that this relationship is important in terms of growth of the fashion industry?	هل هناك أي علاقة بين عروض الأزياء وصناعة الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية؟ كيف تصفون هذه العلاقة بينهما؟ هل تعتقد أن هذه العلاقة مهمة من حيث نموها في صناعة الموضة؟
What is the impact of the domestic fashion industry on the Saudi economy?	ما هو تأثير صناعة الأزياء المحلية على الاقتصاد السعودي؟

<p>Does the government support the fashion industry?</p> <p>If no, why do you think?</p> <p>If yes. Do you think this support is enough or it needs more support?</p>	<p>هل تدعم الحكومة صناعة الأزياء؟</p> <p>إذا لا. لماذا برأيك؟</p> <p>إذا نعم. هل تعتقد ان هذا الدعم كافي ام انها تحتاج لدعم اكبر؟</p>
<p>Do you think that more fashion shows would help to grow the fashion industry in Saudi Arabia? And why?</p>	<p>هل تعتقد أن المزيد من عروض الأزياء شأنه أن يساعد على نمو صناعة الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية؟ ولماذا؟</p>
<p>What are the basic requirements to setup a fashion show?</p> <p>What are the important requirements when setting up fashion shows in Saudi Arabia?</p>	<p>ما هي المتطلبات الأساسية لإعداد عرض الأزياء؟</p> <p>ما هي المتطلبات الهامة عند إعداد عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية؟</p>
<p>Are there any obstacles facing the fashion shows in Saudi Arabia?</p> <p>If yes. What are these obstacles?</p> <p>In your opinion, how can these obstacles be overcome?</p> <p>If no. Are you satisfied with the current Fashion show practices in Saudi Arabia?</p>	<p>هل هناك أي عقبات تواجه عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية؟</p> <p>إذا كانت الإجابة بنعم. ما هي هذه العقبات؟</p> <p>في رأيك، كيف يمكن التغلب على هذه العقبات؟</p> <p>إذا لا. هل أنت راض عن الممارسات الحالية عرض أزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية؟</p>

## 12.4 Appendix D: Preliminary Questionnaire (Arabic)

**digital fashion show**

بناءً على تعليم دينا الحذيف جرحم على المرأة اظهار جسدها امام الرجال. هذه دراسة ميدانية لمعرفة مدى تقبل المجتمع السعودي لفكرة عرض الازياء لارضي بحضور كلا الجنسين (الرجال والنساء).  
نرجو من حضراتكم اجابة الاسئلة المبسطة حول هذا الموضوع

1. هل تفضل ان يكون عرض الازياء

.Mark only one oval

نشارك القطعة الملبسة بدون وجود عارضه ☐

توجد هيئة غير واضحة للعارضه من كذاه لافظه للملبسه ☐





2. في اي منطقة اداريه تسكن في المملكة العربية السعودية  
*Mark only one oval*

- ☐ الرياض
- ☐ مكة المكرمة
- ☐ المدينة المنورة
- ☐ القصيم
- ☐ المنطقة الشرقية
- ☐ عسير
- ☐ تبوك
- ☐ حائل
- ☐ الحدود الشمالية
- ☐ جازان
- ☐ نجران
- ☐ الباحة
- ☐ الجوف



3. الرجاء تحديد المدينة

4. الفئة العمرية

.Mark only one oval

٢٥-١٥ ☐

٣٥-٢٥ ☐

٤٥-٣٥ ☐

٥٥-٤٥ ☐

٥٥ وأكثر ☐

5. الجنس

.Mark only one oval

ذكر ☐

انثى ☐

Powered by



## 12.5 Appendix E: Preliminary Questionnaire (English)

### Digital Fashion Shows

#### Digital Fashion Shows

Based on the teachings of our Islamic religion, it is forbidden for women to show their bodies in front of men. This is a preliminary study of the extent to which the Saudi society accepts the idea of introducing digital fashion show to attend both sexes (men and women). We ask you to answer these questions about this topic.

#### Do you prefer to have a fashion show

.1

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Floating dress without a model.
- ☐ Silhouette presenting a piece of clothing



[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aLtM0cl81rjwF24cf4qcKYhY9IKUq1NC809QW\\_cSs0g/printform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aLtM0cl81rjwF24cf4qcKYhY9IKUq1NC809QW_cSs0g/printform)[07/02/2018 17:18:21]

## Digital Fashion Shows



**Which area in Saudi Arabia do you live in?**

.2

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Riyadh
- ☐ Makkah
- ☐ Medina
- ☐ Qassim
- ☐ Eastern Province
- ☐ Asir
- ☐ Tabuk
- ☐ Hail
- ☐ Northern Border
- ☐ Jizan
- ☐ Najran
- ☐ Baha
- ☐ Aljouf
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please specify which city**

.3

\_\_\_\_\_

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aLlM0cl81rjwF24cf4qcKYhY9IKUq1NC809QW\\_cSs0g/printform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aLlM0cl81rjwF24cf4qcKYhY9IKUq1NC809QW_cSs0g/printform)[07/02/2018 17:18:21]

Digital Fashion Shows

**Age**

.4

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ 15-25  
☐ 25-35  
☐ 35-45  
☐ 45-55  
☐ 55+

**Gender**

.5

*Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female

---

Powered by  
 Google Forms

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aLtM0cl81rjwF24cf4qcKYhY9IKUq1NC809QW\\_cSs0g/printform\[07/02/2018 17:18:21\]](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aLtM0cl81rjwF24cf4qcKYhY9IKUq1NC809QW_cSs0g/printform[07/02/2018 17:18:21])

## 12.6 Appendix F: Consumer Questionnaire 1 (Arabic)

استبيان لمدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن استخدام النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية

15/01/2018, 5:59 am

## استبيان لمدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن استخدام النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية

عزيزي المشارك/ة

أنا طالبة دكتوراه في جامعة دي مونتنورت في المملكة المتحدة تقوم الدراسة على التحقيق في مدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية.

وسوف تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى:

1. التحقق من تأثير العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية على مدى تقبل المظهر الخارجي للمرأة في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية.

2. التحقق إلى أي مدى سيتم تقبل وتبني عروض الأزياء الرقمية في سوق الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية.

والغرض من هذا الاستبيان هو الحصول على فهم أكثر وضوحاً للوصول لأكثر مظهر خارجي للمرأة مقبول في عروض الأزياء الرقمية والذي سيعرض في المملكة العربية السعودية والذي يتوافق مع الدين والعادات والتقاليد.

سيستغرق الاستبيان حوالي 10 دقيقة لإتمامه.

وسأكون ممنته للغاية بمشاركةكم في جمع البيانات من خلال تبادل وجهات نظركم حول هذا الموضوع الهام.

\* لقد قرأت المعلومات الواردة أعلاه، ولقد فهمت الغرض من الاستبيان.

\* سيتم استخدام إجابات الاستبيان لأغراض هذا البحث فقط.

\* لدي الحق في الانسحاب من هذا الاستبيان في أي وقت قبل الانتهاء من اجابة جميع الأسئلة.

\* أفهم أن الأجزاء ذات الصلة من البيانات التي تم جمعها أثناء الدراسة يمكن النظر فيها من قبل الباحثين و / أو المشرفين. أعطي الإذن لهؤلاء الأفراد في الحصول على إجاباتي. . وسيتم حفظ هذا الاستبيان في ذاكرة قرص تخزين مشفرة (Flash memory) مشفرة وسيتم حذفها بعد 6 أشهر من انتهاء البحث.

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى أي مزيد من المعلومات يرجى الاتصال بالباحثة

[P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk](mailto:P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk)

\*Required

1.

أوافق على المشاركة في هذا الاستبيان \*

Tick all that apply

☐ أوافق

### المعلومات العامة

2.

العمر \*

Mark only one oval

☐ أقل من ٢٥

☐ ٢٥-٣٠

☐ ٣١-٣٥

☐ ٣٦-٤٠

☐ ٤١-٤٥

☐ ٤٦-٥٠

☐ أكثر من ٥١

استبيان لمدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن استخدام النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية

15/01/2018, 5:59 am

3.

**الجنس \***

.Mark only one oval

ذكر ☐

أنثى ☐

4.

**الجنسية \***

.Mark only one oval

سعودي ☐

غير سعودي ☐

5.

إذا كنت غير سعودي الرجاء التحديد

6.

**في أي منطقة إدارية (إمارة) في السعودية تعيش \***

.Mark only one oval

منطقة الرياض ☐

منطقة مكة المكرمة ☐

منطقة المدينة المنورة ☐

منطقة القصيم ☐

المنطقة الشرقية ☐

منطقة عسير ☐

منطقة تبوك ☐

منطقة حائل ☐

منطقة الحدود الشمالية ☐

منطقة جيزان ☐

منطقة نجران ☐

منطقة الباحة ☐

منطقة الجوف ☐

7.

**هل تقضي أغلب أيام السنة داخل ام خارج المملكة؟ \***

.Mark only one oval

داخل المملكة العربية السعودية ☐

خارج المملكة العربية السعودية (مبتعث/ موظف/ علاج) ☐

استبيان لمدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن استخدام النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية

15/01/2018, 5:59 am

8.

المؤهل العلمي \*

.Mark only one oval

- ☐ ثانوي أو أقل  
☐ دبلوم بعد الثانوي  
☐ بكالوريوس  
☐ ماجستير  
☐ دكتوراه

9.

التخصص \*

10.

الوظيفة \*

## العادات الشرائية

في هذا القسم نود معرفة عادات المستهلك في شراء الملابس

11.

إلى أي حد تتسوق من المواقع التالية؟ \*

.Mark only one oval per row

أبداً	بعض الأحيان	غالباً	دائماً	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	الأسواق التجارية
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	مواقع الانترنت (مثل: سوق دوت كوم، أمازون...)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي (مثل: إنستجرام)

12.

أين تفضل التسوق؟ \*

.Mark only one oval

- ☐ داخل السعودية  
☐ خارج السعودية

## عروض الأزياء

في هذا القسم القسم نود معرفة مدى اهتمامك بما يتعلق بعروض الأزياء

13.

هل حضرت عرض أزياء داخل السعودية من قبل؟ \*

.Mark only one oval

- ☐ نعم  
☐ لا

14. ما متوسط حضورك لعروض الأزياء؟ \*  
Mark only one oval

- مطلقاً ☐
- كل ٦ شهور ☐
- سنوياً ☐

15. إلى أي درجة تعتقد أن ثقافة عروض الأزياء والاهتمام بها ينال اهتماماً في المجتمع السعودي؟ \*  
Mark only one oval

- أوافق بشده ☐
- موافق ☐
- لا أدري ☐
- غير موافق ☐
- غير موافق بشده ☐

16. هل تتناسب عروض الأزياء المقامة في السعودية مع العادات والتقاليد في المملكة العربية السعودية؟ \*  
Mark only one oval

- أوافق بشده ☐
- موافق ☐
- لا أدري ☐
- غير موافق ☐
- غير موافق بشده ☐

17. ملاحظات

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### عروض الأزياء الرقمية

في هذا المقطع نود أن نعرف اهتمامك بعروض الأزياء الرقمية (عرض الملابس من خلال الفيديو بالدرجة الأولى)

18. هل توافق على حضور عرض أزياء مصور(فيديو) في مكان عام(مثل: الأسواق)؟ \*  
Mark only one oval

- أوافق بشده ☐
- موافق ☐
- لا أدري ☐
- غير موافق ☐
- غير موافق بشده ☐



19. هل توافق أن النموذج المصور (فيديو) وسيلة جيدة لحل محل النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية؟ \*

.Mark only one oval

- ☐ أوافق بشدة  
☐ موافق  
☐ لا أدري  
☐ غير موافق  
☐ غير موافق بشدة

20. هل توافق أن مظهر العارضة في العروض المصورة سوف يؤثر على قبول عرض الأزياء؟ \*

.Mark only one oval

- ☐ أوافق بشدة  
☐ موافق  
☐ لا أدري  
☐ غير موافق  
☐ غير موافق بشدة

21. هل توافق أن تحسن عروض الأزياء المصورة مستوى عرض الملابس داخل المتاجر؟ \*

.Mark only one oval

- ☐ أوافق بشدة  
☐ موافق  
☐ لا أدري  
☐ غير موافق  
☐ غير موافق بشدة

22. في حال وجود عروض أزياء مسجلة مسبقاً يتم عرضها في المحلات التجارية هل توافق أن يؤثر ذلك على إقبال الزبائن على شراء القطع المعروضة في التسجيل؟ \*

.Mark only one oval

- ☐ أوافق بشدة  
☐ موافق  
☐ لا أدري  
☐ غير موافق  
☐ غير موافق بشدة

23. هل توافق أن تحل عروض الأزياء المصورة محل عروض الأزياء الحية في السعودية؟ \*  
Mark only one oval

- ☐ أوافق بشدة  
☐ موافق  
☐ لا أدري  
☐ غير موافق  
☐ غير موافق بشدة

24. ملاحظات

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### العرض الرقمي للأزياء

نود في هذا القسم التعرف على أفضل مظهر للعارضة ليتم قبوله في المجتمع السعودي بشكل عام

25. هل توافق أن مظهر العارضة سوف يؤثر على قبول عرض الأزياء؟ \*  
Mark only one oval

- ☐ أوافق بشدة  
☐ موافق  
☐ لا أدري  
☐ غير موافق  
☐ غير موافق بشدة

26. هل توافق أنه يجب أن يكون هناك بعض القيود المفروضة على الملابس، التي سيتم عرضها في العروض المصورة؟ \*  
Mark only one oval

- ☐ أوافق بشدة  
☐ موافق  
☐ لا أدري  
☐ غير موافق  
☐ غير موافق بشدة

استبيان لدى التجميل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن استخدام النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية

15/01/2018, 5:59 a.m.

27. هل توافق أن يتضمن العرض المصور ملامح وجه واضحة تعارضة الأزياء؟ (الحن، الأنف، إلخ). \*  
Mark only one oval

- ☐ توافق بشدة
- ☐ موافق
- ☐ لا أدرى
- ☐ غير موافق
- ☐ غير موافق بشدة

28. هل توافق أن يتم تغيير لون جلد عارضة الأزياء في العروض المصورة بحيث يتم تمويه لون الجسم الأصلي؟ \*  
Mark only one oval

- ☐ توافق بشدة
- ☐ موافق
- ☐ لا أدرى
- ☐ غير موافق
- ☐ غير موافق بشدة

29. هل توافق ظهور شعر عارضة الأزياء في العروض المصورة؟ (كما هو موضح في الصورة التالية) \*  
Mark only one oval

- ☐ توافق بشدة
- ☐ موافق
- ☐ لا أدرى
- ☐ غير موافق
- ☐ غير موافق بشدة



استبيان لمدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن استخدام النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية

15/01/2018, 5:59 a.m

30. هل توافق أن يتم إظهار عارضة الأزياء دون رأس في العروض المصورة؟ كما هو موضح في الصورة التالية) \*  
Mark only one oval

☐ توافق بشدة  
☐ موافق  
☐ لا أدرى  
☐ غير موافق  
☐ غير موافق بشدة



31. أشر الى الصور المقبولة وغير المقبولة للمظهر الخارجي للعارضة في عروض الأزياء المصورة في الأماكن العامة في المملكة العربية السعودية من الصورة افناء (اللون الأبيض في الصورة لتمويه الجسم ويمكن تغييره لأي لون آخر) \*  
Mark only one oval per row

مقبولة	غير مقبولة	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	B
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	C
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	E
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	F
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	G
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	H
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	I

استبيان لمدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن استخدام النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية

15/01/2018, 5:59 a.m



A



B



C



D



E



F



G



H



I

32. أشر إلى الصور المقبولة وغير المقبولة لشكل الرأس للعارضة في عروض الأزياء المصورة عند عرضها في الأماكن العامة في المملكة العربية السعودية من الصورة أثناء \*
- Mark only one oval per row*

مقبولة	غير مقبولة	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	B
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	C
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	D
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	E
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	F
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	G
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	H

استبيان لمدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الـرقمية عوضاً عن استخدام النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية

15/01/2018, 5:59 a.m



A

B



C



D



E



F



G



H

استبيان لمدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن استخدام النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية

15/01/2018, 5:59 am

33.

ملاحظات

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**شكرا لك على المشاركة في هذا الاستبيان**

أقدر لكم وقتكم الثمين  
إذا كان لديكم أي استفسار الرجاء التواصل مع الباحثة  
[p12049168@myemail.dmu.ac.uk](mailto:p12049168@myemail.dmu.ac.uk)

مع أطيب تمنياتي

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## 12.7 Appendix G: Consumer Questionnaire 1 (English)

An Investigation of the Acceptability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows

15/01/2018, 5:59 am

## An Investigation of the Acceptability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows

Dear participant

I am a PhD student in De Montfort University in the UK conducting an Investigation of the Acceptability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows. the study will seek to:

1. Investigate social or cultural factors and it's influence on the acceptable imagery or presentation of women in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia.
2. Investigate the extent to which digital fashion shows will be adaptable and acceptable to the Saudi Arabian fashion market.

The purpose of the questionnaire is to gain a clearer understanding of the acceptable woman presentation in digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia which is compatible with religion, customs and traditions.

The following questionnaire will require approximately 10 minutes to complete.

I would be very grateful if you would participate in the data collection by sharing your views on this important topic.

\* I have read the information above and understood the purpose of the interview.

\* The questionnaire answers will be used for the purposes of this research only and will remain anonymous.

\* I have the right to withdraw from this questionnaire at anytime before submitting it.

\* I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study may be looked at by the researchers and/or supervisors. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my responses. . And this questionnaire will be saved in a encrypted USB and will be deleted 6 months after research ends. •

\* I have read the information presented above about the study and consent to participating by checking this box

If you require any further information please contact the researcher

[P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk](mailto:P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk)

\*Required

1. I have read the information presented above about the study and consent to participating by checking this box \*

*Tick all that apply.*

☐ I agree

### Personal Information

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1fezGKUzrz3wJ6TbMpOFpbCQJYS6Jqhc4gUJER2yn9xl/printform>

Page 1 of 13

**2. Age \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Under 25  
☐ 25-30  
☐ 31-35  
☐ 36-40  
☐ 41-45  
☐ 46-50  
☐ 50+

**3. Gender \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female

**4. Nationality \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Saudi  
☐ Other (please specify)

**5. if non- saudi please specify**

---

**6. Which area in Saudi Arabia do you live in? \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Riyadh  
☐ Makkah  
☐ Medina  
☐ Qassim  
☐ Eastern Province  
☐ Asir  
☐ Tabuk  
☐ Hail  
☐ Northern Border  
☐ Jizan  
☐ Najran  
☐ Baha  
☐ Aljof

**7. Highest qualification \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ High school or lower
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Bachelor
- ☐ Master
- ☐ PhD
- ☐ Other (please specify)

**8. Specialisation \***

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**9. Occupation \***

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**Purchasing habits**

In this section we would like to know the habits of the consumer in buying clothes

**10. How often on an average do you buy clothes from \****Mark only one oval per row.*

	Always	Very often	Sometimes	Never
Stores	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online websites (eg. Souq.com, Amazon)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media (eg. Instagram)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**11. Do you primarily travel abroad to buy your clothing or do you buy it from local stores? \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Shopping abroad.
- ☐ Shopping in Saudi Arabia.

**Fashion shows**

In this section we would like to know the consumer's interest in fashion shows

**12. Have you ever attended a fashion show in Saudi Arabia? \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**13. How often on average do you go to fashion shows? \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Never  
☐ Every 6 months  
☐ Annually

**14. Saudi Arabian society is interested in fashion show \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

**15. Fashion shows in Saudi Arabia fit with the customs and traditions of Saudi Arabia \****Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

**16. Add comments**

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**Digital fashion Shows**

In this section we would like to know your interest in the digital fashion shows (displaying clothes by using pre-recorded video)

17. would you a to attend a recorded fashion (video) in a public place (such as: shopping malls)? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

18. Do you agree that the pre-recorded fashion (video) is a good way to replace real models in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

19. Do you agree that the model's appearance in recorded fashions will affect the acceptance of the fashion show? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

20. Do you agree that the recorded fashion show will improve in-store clothing displaying level? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

21. where pre- recorded fashion show is being displayed in stores, do you agree that this will affect customers willingness to buy displayed items? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

22. Do you expect that recorded fashion shows will replace live ones in Saudi Arabia? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

23. Add comments

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### Digital Model Presentation

In this section we would like to identify the best model's appearance to be accepted in the Saudi Society in general

24. Do you agree that the appearance of the model will affect the acceptability of the fashion show? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

25. Do you agree that there must be some restrictions on the clothes, which will be modelled in the pre-recorded video? \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

26. Do you agree that the show should expose clear facial features for the model? (Eyes, nose, etc.) \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

27. Do you agree the model's skin colour should be changed in the pre-recorded video fashion show to disguise original body colour? \*

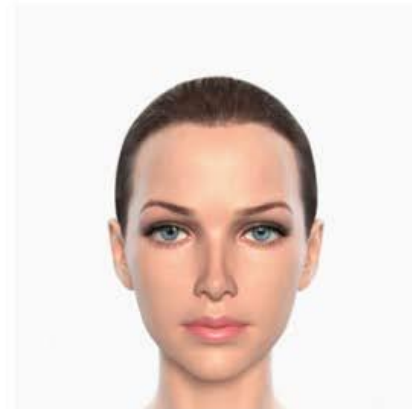
Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

28. Do you agree the appearance of the model's hair is acceptable in the pre-recorded show? (as shown in the image below) \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree



29. Do you agree a headless model is preferable in the pre-recorded video fashion show? (as the image below) \*

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Neutral  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree





30. Indicate which images are acceptable as a female presentation for a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia (the white in the image to disguise the body and can be changed to any other color) \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Acceptable	Not acceptable
A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
F	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
G	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
H	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



31. Add comment

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32. Indicate which images are acceptable as woman's head presentation for a public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia from the image below \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Acceptable	Not acceptable
A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
F	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
G	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
H	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



A

B



C

D

E



F

G

H

33. Add comment

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**Thank you for participate in this questionnaire**

I really appreciate it!

If you require any further information please contact the researcher

[P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk](mailto:P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk)

Best Wishes,

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## 12.8 Appendix H: Consumer Questionnaire 2

An Investigation of the Acceptability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows survey

15/01/2018, 5:56 am

## An Investigation of the Acceptability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows survey

Dear Participant

I am a PhD student in De Montfort University in the UK conducting an Investigation of the Acceptability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows. the study will seek to:

1. Investigate social or cultural factors and it's influence on the acceptable imagery or presentation of women in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia.
2. Investigate the extent to which digital fashion shows will be adaptable and acceptable to the Saudi Arabian fashion market.

The purpose of the questionnaire is to gain a clearer understanding of the acceptable woman presentation in digital fashion shows in Saudi Arabia which is compatible with religion, customs and traditions.

in this short questionnaire, the researcher would like to find the best presentation for woman in public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia. this questionnaire will be divided 3 main sections, each section will give different type of garments

The following questionnaire will require less than 5 minutes to complete.

I would be very grateful if you would participate in the data collection by sharing your views on this important topic.

\* I have read the information above and understood the purpose of the questionnaire.

\* The questionnaire answers will be used for the purposes of this research only and will remain anonymous.

\* I have the right to withdraw from this questionnaire at anytime before submitting it.

\* I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study may be looked at by the researchers and/or supervisors. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my responses. . And this questionnaire will be saved in a encrypted USB and will be deleted 6 months after research ends.

\* I have read the information presented above about the study and consent to participating by checking this box

If you require any further information please contact the researcher

[P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk](mailto:P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk)

**\*Required**

1. I have read the information presented above about the study and consent to participating by checking this box \*

*Tick all that apply.*

☐ I agree

### Chest and neck

The following questions will show a set of images options. Please choose which image you prefer and rank them according to you preference from 1-3

1 is most preferable.

3 is least preferable.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1kolg9eP70ZdNdaH6EwESVCbp4eFGwIE227kKt-4mE90/printform>

Page 1 of 8

If you think that the image is not acceptable please choose option "unacceptable"

### A) Narrow Neck



**A**



**B**



**C**

2. In the previous image can you rank the preferable neck and chest presentation for a woman in public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia \*

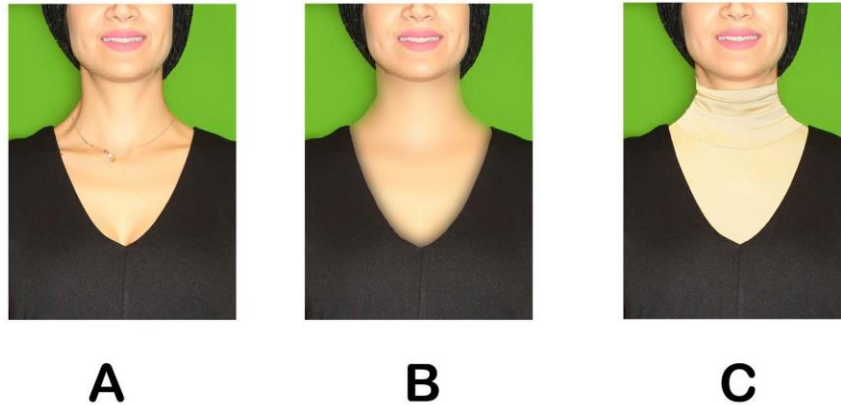
Mark only one oval per row.

	1st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference	Unacceptable
A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. If you wish to add any comments or suggestions about the images please add them below

---

### B) Wide Neck



4. In the previous image can you rank the preferable neck presentation for a woman in public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	1st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference	Unacceptable
A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. If you wish to add any comments or suggestions about the images please add them below

---

### Arms

The following questions will show a set of images options. Please choose which image you prefer and rank them according to you preference from 1-3

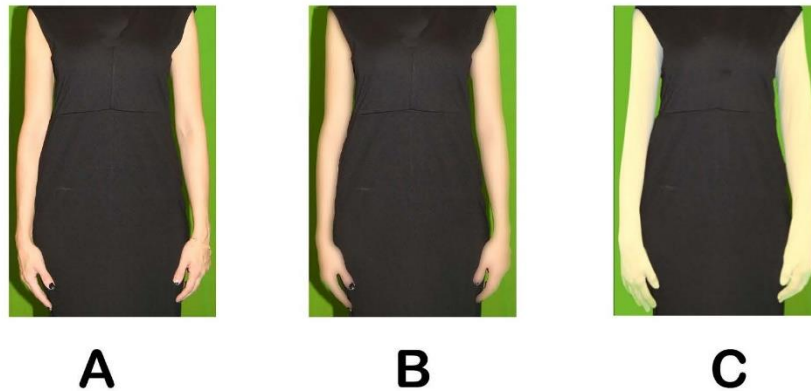
1 is most preferable.

3 is least preferable.

If you think that the image is not acceptable please choose option "unacceptable"

### A) Sleeveless





6. in the previous image can you rank the preferable arm presentation for a woman in public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia \*

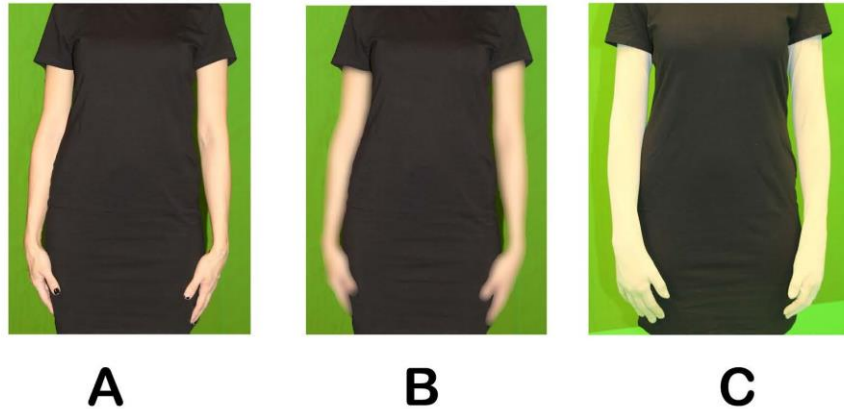
*Mark only one oval per row.*

	1st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference	Unacceptable
A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. If you wish to add any comments or suggestions about the images please add them below

---

## B) short sleeves



8. in the previous image can you rank the preferable arm presentation for a woman in public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia \*

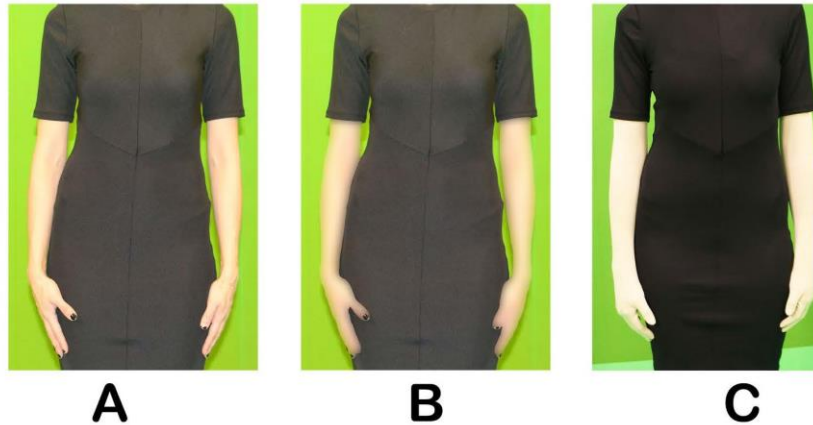
Mark only one oval per row.

	1st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference	Unacceptable
A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. If you wish to add any comments or suggestions about the images please add them below

---

### c) mid length sleeves



10. in the previous image can you rank the preferable arm presentation for a woman in public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	1st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference	Unacceptable
A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. If you wish to add any comments or suggestions about the images please add them below

---

### Leg

The following questions will show a set of images options. Please choose which image you prefer and rank them according to you preference from 1-3

1 is most preferable.

3 is least preferable.

If you think that the image is not acceptable please choose option "unacceptable"

### A) Above knee length

**A****B****C**

12. in the previous image can you rank the preferable leg presentation for a woman in public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia \*

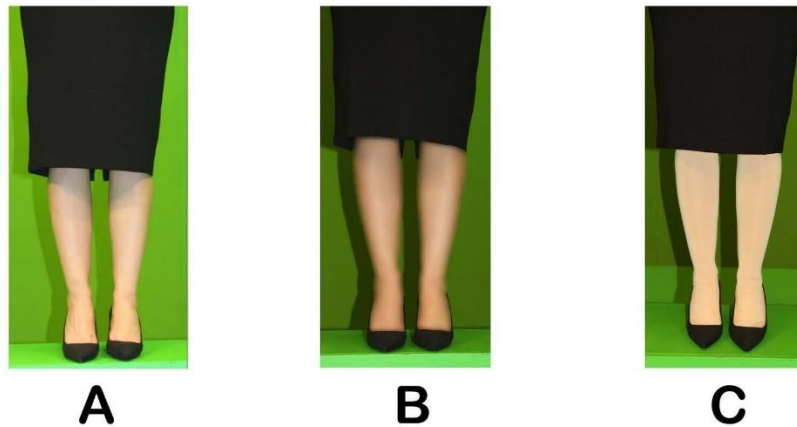
Mark only one oval per row.

	1st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference	Unacceptable
A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. If you wish to add any comments or suggestions about the images please add them below

---

## B) Over knee length



14. in the previous image can you rank the preferable leg presentation for a woman in public digital fashion show in Saudi Arabia \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	1st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference	Unacceptable
A	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. If you wish to add any comments or suggestions about the images please add them below

---

## 12.9 Appendix I: Focus Group Questions

Consumer focus group and key leader's individual questions

Questions	السؤال
Is the model's appearance acceptable in the digital fashion show?	هل مظهر العارضة في عرض الأزياء الرقمي مقبول؟
What is your opinion about the displayed garments?	ما رأيك بالملابس المعروضة؟
What do you think of the head covering?	ما رأيك في غطاء الرأس؟
What is your opinion of the bodysuit?	ما رأيك في بدلة الجسم؟
Did you find any of the features inappropriate?	هل وجدت شي غير مناسب في العرض؟
What is your opinion toward the digital fashion show?	ما رأيك تجاه عرض الأزياء الرقمي؟
What do you suggest to improve the digital fashion show?	ماذا تقترح لتحسين عرض الأزياء الرقمي؟
Do you think that the displayed digital fashion show is an effective way to show the garments?	هل تظن أن عرض الأزياء الرقمي المعروض يعتبر طريقة فعالة لعرض القطع الملبسية؟
Do you feel that a digital fashion show is a suitable replacement for a live fashion show?	هل تشعر أن عرض الأزياء الرقمي يعتبر بديل جيد لعروض الأزياء الحية
Is it appropriate to display the digital fashion show in public places in Saudi Arabia? Why?	هل من اللائق عرض هذا العرض الأزياء الرقمي في مناطق عامة في السعودية؟ ولماذا؟

Where do you expect to see the digital fashion show? Stores, internet, fashion events?	اين تتوقع ان ترى عروض الأزياء الرقمية؟ في المحلات. شبكة الانترنت. فعاليات خاصة بالموضة؟
By watching the digital fashion show do you think that it would help you to want to buy the garments?	بعد مشاهدة عرض الأزياء الرقمي هل تعتقد انه يساعدك على شراء القطعه الملبسيه ام لا؟

## Fashion Designers Focus Group Questions

Questions	السؤال
Is the model's appearance acceptable in the digital fashion show?	هل مظهر العارضة في عرض الأزياء الرقمي مقبول؟
What do you think about the displayed garments? Are they acceptable?	مارايك في الملابس المعروضة؟ هل هي مقبولة؟
Do you think that this digital fashion show effectively presents the garment details?	هل تعتقد أن هذا العرض الأزياء الرقمية يعرض بشكل فعال تفاصيل الملابس؟
What do you think of the head covering?	ما رأيك في غطاء الرأس؟
What do you think of the bodysuit?	مارايك في بدلة الجسم؟
To improve the digital fashion show what do you suggest?	ماذا تقترح لتحسين عرض الأزياء الرقمي؟
Do you think that this digital fashion show would help the Saudi designers to promote their collection?	هل تعتقد أن هذا العرض الأزياء الرقمية من شأنه أن يساعد المصممين السعوديين لتعزيز الترويج للتصاميم؟
Would this digital fashion show help you to reach your market target?	هل هذا العرض الأزياء الرقمية تساعدك على الوصول إلى الفئة المستهدفة في السوق؟

Do you feel that a digital fashion show is a suitable replacement for a live fashion show?	هل تشعر أن عرض الأزياء الرقمي يعتبر بديل جيد لعروض الأزياء الحية
Where do you expect to see the digital fashion show? Stores, internet, fashion events?	اين تتوقع ان ترى عروض الأزياء الرقمية؟ في المحلات. شبكة الانترنت. فعاليات خاصة بالموضة؟
Do you think the digital fashion show is appropriate to be displayed in public places in Saudi Arabia? Why?	هل تعتقد أن عرض الأزياء الرقمي مناسب للعرض في الأماكن العامة في المملكة العربية السعودية؟ لماذا؟



## 12.10 Appendix I: Cultural leaders Interview Consent Form

Arabic

## نموذج الموافقة

التحقيق في العملية لاستخدام نماذج رقمية على نماذج حقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية  
عزيزي المشارك  
الغرض من هذه المقابلة هو اكتساب فهم أكثر وضوحاً من الجوانب الثقافية والدينية الاجتماعية تجاه عرض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية. وسأكون ممتناً للغاية إذا كنت ستشارك في جمع البيانات من خلال تبادل وجهات نظركم حول هذا الموضوع الهام. من خلال بحثي ونأمل تفهم أفضل للقضايا التالية:

1. التحقيق في العوامل التأثيرات الاجتماعية والثقافية والصور مقبولة أو عرض المرأة في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية.
2. التحقيق في مدى عروض الأزياء الرقمية سوف تكون قابلة للتكيف ومقبول للسوق الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية.
3. التحقيق في مدى تقبل المستهلكين للنماذج الرقمية لعروض الأزياء على النماذج الحقيقية لها.

لقد قرأت المعلومات الواردة في الرسالة معلومات عن الدراسة "التحقيق في العملية لاستخدام نماذج رقمية على نماذج حقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية"

( )

وقد أتيت لي الفرصة لطرح أي أسئلة تتعلق هذه الدراسة، وحصل على أجوبة شافية لأسئلتني، وأية تفاصيل إضافية أردت.

( )

وأدرك أيضاً أن مقتطفات من الاستبيان يمكن أن تدرج في المنشورات القادمة من هذا البحث. سيتم الاحتفاظ الاقتباسات مجهول.

( )

وأنا أفهم أن الأجزاء ذات الصلة من البيانات التي تم جمعها أثناء الدراسة يمكن النظر إليها من قبل الباحثين و / أو المشرفين. أعطي الإذن لهؤلاء الأفراد في الحصول على إجاباتي.

( )

وأنا أفهم أن أستطيع أن انسحب من هذه الدراسة في أي وقت، مع عدم وجود عقوبة، وسيتم تدمير جميع البيانات التي تم جمعها من لي.

( )

مع المعرفة الكاملة لجميع ما سبق، أنا أوافق على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة.

( ) أوافق

• أنا أوافق على أن يتم الاتصال بي مرة أخرى من قبل الباحثين إذا إجاباتي تؤدي إلى نتائج مثيرة للاهتمام .

( ) أوافق

( ) لا أوافق

• كيف كنت ترغب في الكشف عن هويته لاقتراح من الدراسة

( ) الاسم، الوظيفة، والمنظمة

( ) الوظيفة، والمنظمة

( ) المنظمة

الوظيفة:

التوقيع:

التاريخ:

اسم المشارك:

منظمة:

معلومات الاتصال:

An Investigation of the Practicability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in  
Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows

English

Dear participant

The propose of the interview is to gain clearer understanding of cultural, religious, social aspects toward the presentation of fashion in Saudi Arabia. I would be very grateful if you would participate in the data collection by sharing your views on this important topic.

Through my research I hope better understand the following issues:

1. Investigate social or cultural factors influences and the acceptable imagery or presentation of women in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia.
2. Investigate the extent to which digital fashion shows will be adaptable and acceptable to the Saudi Arabian fashion market.
3. Investigate to what extent consumers will accept digital models over real models.

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the study " An Investigation of the Practicability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows"

☐

I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, and received satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted. ☐

I am also aware that excerpts from the questionnaire may be included in publications to come from this research. Quotations will be kept anonymous. ☐

I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study may be looked at by the researchers and/or supervisors. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my responses.

☐

I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time, with no penalty, and all data that has been collected from me will be destroyed. ☐

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree to participate in this study.

☐ I agree

- I agree to being contacted again by the researchers if my responses give rise to interesting findings or cross-references.

☐ No

☐ Yes

- How do you wish to be identified for the propose of the study

☐ Name, Position, Organization

☐ Position, organization

☐ Organization

-----  
-----  
Participant Name:

Position:

Organization:

Signature:

Contact information:

Date:

### 12.11 Appendix J: Fashion Designers Consent Form

An Investigation of the Acceptability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows

Dear participant

The purpose of the interview is to gain a clearer understanding of the practices of fashion designers when promoting their designs and identify any challenges in this process. I would be very grateful if you would participate in the data collection by sharing your views on this important topic.

Through my research I hope better understand the following issues:

- Investigate social or cultural factors and it's influence on the acceptable imagery of presentation of women in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia.
- Investigate the extent to which digital fashion shows will be adaptable and acceptable to the Saudi Arabian fashion market.

I have read the information presented above and understood the purpose of the interview. ☐

I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, and received satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted.

☐

I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in publications to come from this research and a full transcript of the interview will be included within my thesis in which will be identified. ☐

I understand that my interview will be audio recorded and may be looked at by the researchers and/or supervisors. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my recording. These interviews will be saved in a DMU encrypted USB and will be deleted 6 months after research ends.

☐

I understand that I can withdraw from this study within 7 days, with no penalty, and all data that has been collected from me will be destroyed. (Contact detail below) ☐

With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree to participate in this study.

☐ I agree

- I agree to be contacted again by the researchers if my responses give rise to interesting findings or cross-references.

☐ No

☐ Yes

- How do you wish to be identified for the propose of the study

☐ Name, Position, Organization

☐ Position, organization

☐ Organization

☐ I would prefer to remain anonymous.

Participant Name:

Position:

Organization:

Signature:

Contact Information:

Date:

If you wish to withdraw from the study during the next 7 days please contact me on

P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk

## 12.12 Appendix K: Focus Group Consent Form and Visualisation Evaluation (Arabic and English)

Evaluating The Digital Fashion Show

### Evaluating The Digital Fashion Show

Dear participant

I am a PhD student in De Montfort University in the UK conducting an Investigation of the Acceptability of Using Digital Models over Real Models in Saudi Arabian Fashion Shows. The study will seek to:

1. Investigate social or cultural factors and its influence on the acceptable imagery or presentation of women in fashion shows in Saudi Arabia
2. Investigate the extent to which digital fashion shows will be adaptable and acceptable to the Saudi Arabian fashion market

The purpose of the questionnaire is to evaluate the proposed digital fashion show. This questionnaire is combined with a focus group to gain a clearer understanding and evaluating this digital fashion show

I would be very grateful if you would participate in the data collection by sharing your views on this important topic. I have read the information above and understood the purpose of the questionnaire and focus group. The questionnaire answers and focus group discussion answers will be used for the purposes of this research only and will remain anonymous. I have the right to withdraw from this questionnaire and focus group at anytime before it ends. I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study may be looked at by the researchers and/or supervisors. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my responses. And this questionnaire answers and recorded focus group will be saved in a encrypted USB and will be deleted 6 months after research ends. I have read the information presented above about the study and consent to participating by checking this box

If you require any further information please contact the researcher

[P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk](mailto:P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk)

عزيزي المشاركون/ة  
أنا طالبة دكتوراه في جامعة دي مونتفورت في المملكة المتحدة. تقوم الدراسة على التحقيق في مدى التقبل لاستخدام النماذج الرقمية عوضاً عن النماذج الحقيقية في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية. وسوف تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى:  
1. التحقق من تأثير العوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية على مدى تقبل المظهر الخارجي للمرأة في عروض الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية.  
2. التحقيق إلى أي مدى سيتم تقبل وتبني عروض الأزياء الرقمية في سوق الأزياء في المملكة العربية السعودية.

والغرض من الاستبيان هو تقييم عرض الأزياء الرقمية المقترح بالإضافة إلى جلسته نقائلية للحصول على فهم أوضح. وسأكون ممتنة للغاية بمتشارككم في جمع البيانات من خلال تبادل وجهات نظركم حول هذا الموضوع الهام. \* لقد قرأت المعلومات أعلاه وفهمت الغرض من الاستبيان ومجموعة التركيز. \* ستستخدم إجابات الاستبيان وجملة المناقشة لأغراض هذا البحث فقط وستبقى مجهولة الهوية. \* لدي الحق في الانسحاب من هذا الاستبيان وجملة المناقشة في أي وقت قبل أن ينتهي. \* أفهم أن الأقسام ذات الصلة من البيانات التي تم جمعها خلال الدراسة يمكن أن ينظر إليها من قبل الباحثين و / أو المشرقيين. أعطي الإنع لهؤلاء الأفراد للوصول إلى إجاباتي. \* سيتم حفظ هذا الاستبيان وتسجيل مجموعة التركيز في يو إس بي (بطاقة ذاكرة) مشفرة وسيتم حذف 6 أشهر بعد انتهاء البحث. \* لقد قرأت المعلومات المقدمة أعلاه حول الدراسة والموافقة على المشاركة عن طريق تحديد هذا المربع

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مزيد من المعلومات يرجى الاتصال بالباحث

[P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk](mailto:P12049168@my365.dmu.ac.uk)

\*Required

1. I have read the information presented above about the study and consent to participating by

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ObRanB7B4fP9e5fwjX-sag7pBhQWUvLe\\_N5vY2p8q8/printform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ObRanB7B4fP9e5fwjX-sag7pBhQWUvLe_N5vY2p8q8/printform)[25/02/2018 12:51:59]

Evaluating The Digital Fashion Show

\* لقد قرأت المعلومات الواردة أعلاه حول الدراسة والموافقة على المشاركة عن طريق تحديد هذا المربع

Mark only one oval.

☐

I agree اوافق

☐

I disagree لا اوافق

Stop filling out this form.

2.

\* Please select the language of the questionnaire / الرجاء اختيار لغة الاستبيان

Mark only one oval

Skip to question 6. العربية ☐

English ☐

## Evaluating the digital fashion show

In this section we would like you to rate each model presentation

3. would you please rate the presentations in the digital fashion show \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Totally unacceptable	Unacceptable	Acceptable	Totally acceptable
Pink long dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gold long dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Short sleeveless dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Red long dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blue dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long black and white sleeveless dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Long black and white long sleeve dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Short red roses dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Short long sleeve dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Do you think that the DFS is a good way to present the garments? \*

Mark only one oval.

☐

Yes

☐

No

5. If you have any comments please add it below

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Stop filling out this form.

تقييم عرض الأزياء الرقمية

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ObRanB7B4fP9e5lwjX-sxg7pBhQWUvLc\\_N5vY2p8q8/printform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ObRanB7B4fP9e5lwjX-sxg7pBhQWUvLc_N5vY2p8q8/printform)[25/02/2018 12:51:59]

في هذا القسم نود منك أن نقيم كل عرض نموذجي  
1 غير مقبول تماماً  
4 مقبول جداً

6.

**الرجاء تقييم المظاهر في عرض الأزياء الرقمي \***  
Mark only one oval per row

غير مقبول تماماً	غير مقبول	مقبول	مقبول تماماً	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	ثوب طويل زهري
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	ثوب طويل ذهبي
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	فساتان اسود قصير بدون اكمام
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	ثوب طويل احمر
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	ثوب أزرق
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	فساتان ابيض واسود بدون اكمام
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	ثوب طويل ابيض واسود
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	فساتان قصير بزهور حمراء
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	فساتان قصير اسود باكمام طويلة

7.

**هل تعتقد أن عرض الأزياء الرقمية هي وسيلة جيدة لتقديم الملابس؟ \***  
Mark only one oval

نعم ☐

لا ☐

8.

إذا كان لديك أي تعليقات يرجى إضافته أدناه

---



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---



## 12.13 Appendix L: Nvivo Shot screen.

FashionDesigner.nvp - NVivo Pro

FILE HOME CREATE DATA ANALYZE QUERY EXPLORE LAYOUT VIEW

Document External Memo Audio Video Framework Matrix

Nodes Sources

Look for: Search In: Nodes

Nodes Cases Relationships Node Matrices

Nodes

Name	Sources	References
Censorship and real design	0	0
Yes	3	3
No	0	0
In some extent	1	1
Average of fashion shows	0	0
Annual	2	2
Seasonal	2	2
No	1	2
Importance of Fashion sho	0	0
Important	5	5
Not important	0	0
Gender audience	0	0
Male	1	1
Female	1	1
No significant differenc	2	2

Drag selection here to code to a new node

Nodes

DES1 DES2 DES3 DES4 DES5 DES6 DES7 DES8 DES9 DES10

**Fashion shows**

**Q4 On average how often do you have fashion shows?**

I made one fashion show in (Maison Bo-M) and is a store in Riyadh, there was a fashion week and displayed many products, including my collection. This event held twice-yearly ,summer and winter

**In Bakkarat event held at the launch of the collection once a year. This is for female only.**

**Is there any specific seasons for fashion shows in Saudi Arabia?**

Certainly in winter and summer, but here there is no winter, but the stores or shops keen to provide winter clothing for buyers providers to travel

Enter node name (CTRL+Q)

## 12.14 Appendix M: Story board

